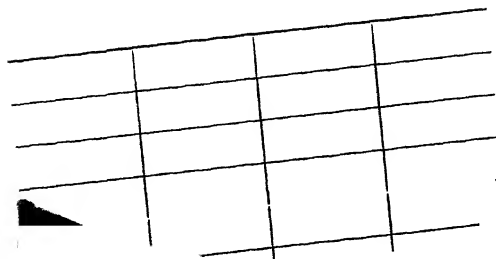




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**THE LIVING WORLD  
OF PHILOSOPHY**



# THE LIVING WORLD OF PHILOSOPHY

by HENRY THOMAS, Ph.D.

A large, stylized, calligraphic monogram of the letters 'LWS' in a black serif font. The letters are interconnected with elegant, flowing lines, characteristic of a personal or institutional crest.

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## FOREWORD

Every one of us is a born philosopher. Like Monsieur Jourdain in Molière's comedy, we are always using philosophy though many of us may never have been aware of the fact. The thirst for philosophy, the love of wisdom, is one of the compelling instincts in human existence.

In this book we shall try to survey the human instinct for philosophy from two angles—the speculative and the practical.

1. *The speculative angle.* This book is designed as an introduction to one of the most inviting of artistic collections—the treasure-house of truth. Here we shall examine the meaning of the world's most precious thoughts, and we shall evaluate and arrange them into a philosophical view of life. We shall thus endeavor to come into the possession of our rightful share of the world's inherited wisdom.

2. *The practical angle.* This book is intended to show the significance of philosophy in our daily life. We philosophize in everything we plan, in everything we do. For our philosophy is the sum of our beliefs. And the sum of our beliefs is the foundation upon which we base our daily activities. Philosophy, as we shall see, brings the glow of understanding into the perplexity of our common experiences. It is the sunlight of the human soul, the lamp that illumines all the sciences. Philosophy, in short, is the practical science of life.

In order to illustrate this point, take an average day in your own life.

You open your eyes in the morning, and immediately your mind begins to work—whether consciously or subconsciously—upon the problems of the day. You pull up the shade, and you notice that the day is overcast. How are you going to tackle the prospect of a cloudy, probably a rainy, day? With a smile, or a frown? In other words, are you an optimist or a pessimist?

You put on your clothes. From the kitchen you get the odor of

frying bacon and eggs. Breakfast for the family. What are you going to do about your own breakfast? Will you make it a light or a heavy meal? Which of the two is the more conducive to the healthy functioning of your body, to the efficient working of your mind?

You sit down at the breakfast table and glance at the morning paper. Interesting news. Murders, thefts, births, marriages, deaths, strikes, inventions, discoveries, dramas, elections, calamities, concerts, sports. And, weaving a design out of all these scattered threads of information, little patterns of philosophy by the editors and the columnists of the day. You find all these items fascinating. Why? Because your own life is affected by whatever happens in the world. Whenever the bell tolls, it tolls for you. When you read about the murdered man, you feel, "There lies my brother—and, but for the grace of God, myself." When you read about the strike, you ask yourself, "What about the rights of the employers in this controversy? Of the workers? Of the public? How is it going to affect my community, my family, myself? What can society do to avoid the recurrence of such a strike? Is there anything that I, personally, can do about it?" Or you read about the coming election. All sorts of candidates—radicals, liberals, conservatives, reactionaries. What candidate are you going to vote for? Which of them is the more likely to serve the interests of democracy? Why do you—or do you—believe in democracy? Is this form of government better than dictatorship? That is, better for you and for those dearest to you?

You leave your breakfast table now and go to your job. This job of yours. Are you your own boss? Of course not. Whether you are a mechanic, a manufacturer, a bus-driver, a banker, a lawyer, a doctor, a grocer, a teacher, an artist, a clergyman, or a clerk, you are but part of an organized society. What does society owe to your job? What does your job owe to society? What are you today doing on your job in order that it may result in the greatest efficiency for your associates, your customers, your clients, your congregation, yourself?

And now, after a hard day's work and many vexations, you return home. From the family nest, out into the world, and back again into the family nest. What is this thing, your family? Why is it so important in your everyday life? How is it getting along?

Is it a friendly unit, or a jumble of quarrelsome individuals? In either case, what are the reasons for the condition? Whose the praise, whose the blame? What are your own responsibilities in the matter?

Dinnertime. Conversations on various subjects. Discussions of philosophical problems—you've probably been calling them *practical* problems—that have confronted the various members of the family during the day. Johnny's impertinence toward his teachers. Carol's desire to go on the stage. Hilda's infatuation for that Thompson boy. Aunt Sara's arthritis—"such a sweet creature, why does God make her suffer so?" Cousin Betty's extravagance—*she* calls it *generosity*. Uncle Peter's hypocrisy—*he* calls it *tact*. Words, shades of meaning, judgments of character. What do *you* think of these characteristics of Cousin Betty and Uncle Peter? By what names would *you* classify them? What about similar characteristics in your *own* dealing with your neighbors? What about your character in general? Would you call yourself a good person? What is good? What is evil?

Your dinner over, you sit back for a smoke. A period of reflection, of looking inward, of becoming better acquainted with yourself. Who are you? Compared to the universe, but an atom; but compared to the atom, a universe. What is this talk you've been hearing about atoms and universes? Do worlds come and go, like the spirals of smoke that drift out of your mouth? Are they equally haphazard, equally unimportant? Or is there a definite plan, an eternal purpose that guides the creation and the destruction of a planet, a human being, a blade of grass?

Evening, an easy chair, a lighted lamp. You turn on the radio. Listen now to that violin concerto. It stirs you like a rich red wine. What is the meaning of this emotion? What is there about the music of a violin that awakens such radiant memories and fervent hopes? Beauty. What is it? A beautiful face, a beautiful song, a beautiful deed. Is there some vital connection between them? Is beauty merely an incitement to pleasure, a momentary tickling of the eye or the ear? Or is it a "flash that illumines the night of our life," a promise of something divine? How do the beautiful moments of your own life react upon you? Do they serve as a stimulus for deeper thoughts, nobler deeds, a happier existence?

*A happier existence.* Here is the whole crux of the matter—the one thing that you and I and all the rest of us are after. But how is that possible? Look at Grandpa Tobey. Worked hard and scrimped and suffered all his life. To what end? Just to grow old and die. And isn't that the end to Everyman's quest for happiness? Doesn't every road of promise lead into the blind alley of decay and death? Is the destiny of your life but to die, to sleep—no more? Or is death the great investiture—the casting-off of the old garment for the putting-on of the new, the birth of the flower out of the burial of the seed, the emergence of the butterfly from the chrysalis of the grave—the opening of the cage-door that the imprisoned bird may be set free?

Such are but a few of the thousands of problems that confront us every day. And they are of the utmost importance. For upon their solution depends the entire course of our life. In the following chapters, these problems will be examined not only historically but topically. They will be classified under seven sections. Each of the seven sections will contain: first, an outline of what the greatest philosophers throughout the ages have said on the subject; and then, a brief and simple and, I trust, comprehensive summary of the most recent observations on the subject as applied to the actual problems of our daily activity.

For philosophy, as I shall try to show in this book, is not merely a thesis for academic discussion; it is a matter of vital and universal human interest. *Philosophy is co-extensive with life.*

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**THE LIVING WORLD  
OF PHILOSOPHY**



## The Riddle of Existence — Metaphysics

### *Statement of the Riddle*

THE study of Metaphysics is an attempt to build a bridge of illuminating thoughts between the unknown and the known. It tries to answer the most important question that perplexes the human mind: What is the real nature of the world we live in? What is matter? What is mind? Are they two different realities, or are they merely different aspects of the selfsame reality? Are matter and mind the instruments of mechanical laws, or are they the creators as well as the creatures of their own destinies?

To bring the problem closer down to earth: What sort of creatures are we, you and I? Are we the helpless slaves of our time and place, accidental bits of clockwork wound up by an impersonal mainspring to tick away our little hour here on earth and then to be forever still? Or are we the free agents of a definite plan, children endowed by a loving Father with divine instincts and immortal souls?

What, in short, is truth? Is it possible for our finite human minds to discover it? Or is our restless search for the truth, as a cynical philosopher has put it, merely like groping in a dark room for a black cat that isn't there? Can we, in our quest for the truth, rely upon the evidence of our senses—that is, upon appearances? The planets appear to be fixed in the sky. The earth appears to be standing still. The sun appears to move. When we look through the window of a speeding train, the landscape appears to be speeding past

our eyes. A straight piece of wood dipped into water appears to be bent. A lump of iron appears to be motionless and solid, although in reality—the scientists tell us—it is a whirlwind of widely separated atoms, each of them consisting of nothing more substantial than a mathematical formula of positive and negative electric charges.

The thoughtless, observed an Oriental poet, quarrel about surface appearances. The thoughtful try to understand the underlying truth. Josiah Royce, the celebrated sage of Harvard, related the story of two medieval soldiers who met near a shield that was silver on the one side and gold on the other. The first soldier maintained that the shield was all silver; the second, that it was all gold. They fought over it until they exchanged sides. Whereupon each of the soldiers began to contradict himself but continued to insist that the other was a liar.

Mr. Royce might have concluded the story somewhat as follows: As the two soldiers were fighting and reviling each other, along came a philosopher. He asked them the reason for their quarrel; and when they gave him the answer, he said: "If I were you, gentlemen, I would beat the shield into dust. And then I would study the nature of the dust in order to discover the nature of the shield."

It is the business of the philosopher—and at the heart of every philosopher dwells the metaphysician—to determine the nature of the dust, earth-dust and star-dust and soul-dust, that goes into the making of man and the world, of birth and life and growth and decay and death. And of life beyond? This, too, lies within the province of the metaphysical quest.

It is the purpose of metaphysics, in other words, to ascertain the substance that lies at the basis of all reality.

At this point there arises a natural question: Why not leave it to science to determine the ultimate meaning of reality? Why bother with the metaphysician when the physicist and the astronomer and the chemist are daily extending the horizons of knowledge into the regions of the unknown? The answer to this question is that the "analysis of science," to quote Henri Bergson, "yields us only half-truths." It is said that one day a professor took his students into his laboratory to show them the composition of a human being. There it was, all bottled up and sealed and labeled and neatly arranged in

a row—"the complete substance that once was a man named John Smith." The students examined the contents of the glass jars and took notes:

Enough water to fill a 10-gallon barrel.

Enough fat for seven bars of soap.

Carbon for 9,000 lead pencils.

Phosphorus for 2,200 matches.

Iron for 2 small nails.

Lime enough to whitewash a chicken-coop.

Small sprinklings of magnesium and sulphur.

"All this," observed one of the students as he finished taking notes, "is very interesting. But where is John Smith?"

It is the business of the metaphysician to find the answer not only to the question, *where* is John Smith? but also to the related questions, *what* is John Smith? and, *why* is John Smith *where* he is and *what* he is? The province of metaphysics is the entire meaning of life. "To find this meaning," declared Robert Browning, "is my meat and drink."

This, then, is the adventurous quest upon which we are about to set out. The greatest minds of the centuries have concerned themselves with this adventure. Starting from the boundaries of the little island of light revealed to our scientific investigations, they have made daring leaps into the vast ocean of darkness beyond. And they have come back, if not with the whole truth, then at least with radiant glimpses of it. Some of us may be impatient with these glittering fragments of knowledge when the desire of our hearts is to embrace the "total perspective" of thought. Let us remember, however, that with all our progress we are still on the threshold of understanding. Human civilization upon this planet is only about eight thousand years old. Human life upon this planet—an estimate based upon the probable duration of the sun's heat—is likely to go on for about a million million years. The period of our education has only begun. We have had time to acquire just a few syllables of the learning which we are destined ultimately to possess. Let us then be satisfied with the glimpses of the truth that we shall see revealed through the minds of the great metaphysicians. Let us take pleasure in their company as we join them in their adventure to solve the riddle of existence. And let us try, if possible, to piece

together their fragments of wisdom into a pattern of reason that shall bring us a step nearer to the truth.

### *The Solution Offered by the Oriental Philosophers*

First of all we shall examine the truth—that is, the answer to the riddle of existence—as it appeared to the philosophers who lived in the infancy of human progress. These philosophers of the Orient—the cradle of civilization—were imaginative poets rather than scholarly logicians. Their picture of the world was that of a precocious child who sees a soul in a mechanical toy. All nature to them was alive. In their myth-making fancies they beheld, to paraphrase Shakespeare, books in running brooks, sermons in stones, and God in everything. The earliest philosophers were not only poets but priests, not only metaphysicians but theologians. In the hazy dawn of speculative thought, it is hard to distinguish between philosophy and religion.

We find the first religious philosophers in history among the ancient Egyptians. These “daring navigators into regions unknown” regarded the world as an inverted bowl, with the earth at the bottom and the stars suspended like lanterns from the top.

But these lanterns were not merely dead pinpoints of light. They were living bodies with flaming souls. The visible stars were the external forms of invisible spirits or gods. Among the later Egyptians, the entire sky was personified into a supreme God lying tenderly over the belly of the earth. From this divine embrace, they said, all things were created with a body composed of earthly clay and a soul compounded of heavenly fire. This undying fire of heaven resides not only in every human creature but in every created thing—in the palm tree that gives restful shade, the river that waters the plain, the spring that slakes the thirst, the flower that brings fragrance and beauty to the human heart, even the lowly onion that adds the zest of spice to the banquet of life. In the philosophy of the Egyptians all things, be they ever so humble, possess within them the divine spark.

Equally convinced of the heavenly spark within all earthly things were the Babylonians. In the beginning, said their philosophers, all was Chaos. There was no heaven above and no earth below. But



finally Mother Chaos and Father Ocean—the Babylonians do not make it clear how the Ocean developed out of Chaos—decided to mingle their elements together in wedlock; and out of this union creation arose. But Chaos, a quarrelsome and disorderly shrew, rebelled against the order of creation and reduced it all to confusion again. And then God arose—how He arose we are not told—slew Chaos with a whirlwind and a thunderbolt, split it into halves, hung one of the halves on high and moulded it into the heavens, and spread the other half under His feet and shaped it into the earth.

And thus, out of the dead body of Chaos came the new life of the world. This may be crude thinking, but it is good observation. Strip this story of its poetical extravagance, and you have a simple scientific fact—the emergence of life out of death, the birth of the flower out of the decay of the seed. The end of life, believed the Babylonian philosophers, is not an extinction. It is really a resurrection—a rearrangement of an old disorder into a new order. Even Chaos does not die; it is merely “split into halves,” like an acorn, in order that it may be shaped into a living and growing oak-tree. To the Babylonians, as to the Egyptians, everything is endowed with life. “When God created the world out of Chaos, He mingled earth and heaven into a divine paste and kneaded it into angels and men.” The difference between them is the proportion of fire and clay in their make-up. The angels are nearly all fire; the men, nearly all clay.

But every body of clay has its soul of fire. Every star and planet, every object of nature, every *force* in nature, has its inherent spirit. And these spirits are the ministers of God in the destiny of man.

And what is this destiny? “When God created mankind, he determined death for mankind.” But we must be of good cheer. For death is no evil; it is the unveiling of all that is good. “Death,” wrote the philosopher-king, Tabi, “is before me today, like the recovery of a sick man, like going forth into a garden after sickness . . . like the course of a cataract that leaps into the arms of the all-embracing sea.”

From non-existence to life, from life to immortality—this, in a nutshell, is the metaphysical doctrine of the Egyptians and the Babylonians. Very similar to it is the teaching of the Persians. Out

of Chaos, their philosophers tell us, God created the universe. And the process of creation—here we have an inkling of pre-Darwinian evolution—was a drama of six acts. First came the heavens; then the waters; out of the waters emerged the earth; from the soil of the earth arose the plants; next appeared the living creatures upon its surface and in the air above; finally, when all had been prepared for his reception, arrived the leading actor, Man.

And to Man was given the part to interpret the drama of God. And to discover the *nature* of God. The Persian God, Ahura-Mazda (Lord of Light), was identical with “the whole circle of the heavens.” Perhaps it would be nearer to the conception of the Persians to say that the heavens were a luminous veil that revealed the majesty of God. For Ahura-Mazda, they declared, “clothes Himself with the solid vault of the firmament as his garment”—a magnificent figure of speech borrowed by the German poet, Goethe, to describe the pantheism of Spinoza. The seeds of many a modern philosophical theory are to be found deeply imbedded in the metaphysical rhapsodies of the old Oriental philosophers. “The body of Ahura-Mazda,” to continue the Persian description, “is the light and the sovereign glory . . . The sun and the moon are His eyes . . . and the stars are the fiery syllables of His divine plan.” More than that, they are the *living agents* of His plan. Once more we return to the Oriental theory of living matter. Every physical body has a soul. In His drama of creation, declared the Persian philosophers, God called to His assistance a staff of co-workers, the living powers of nature—fire and water, thunder and lightning, clouds and vapors and wind and rain.

But over and above them all, God was supreme. “Tell me, O Ahura-Mazda, who is it that guides the sun and the stars in their courses and determines the rising and the setting of the day? . . . Who, from below, sustains the earth and the firmament from falling—who upholds the waters and the planets—who yokes swiftmess with the winds and the clouds—who, I ask of Thee, Ahura-Mazda, performs all these handiworks in accordance with the Divine Plan?”

This passage, so strangely similar to Psalm 104, represents God as supreme over all things. The writings of the later Persian philosophers depict Him as *identical with* all things—a distinct preview of

Spinoza's doctrine of Pantheism. "I am God," wrote the mystic-philosopher, Hallaj. "I am He whom I love, and He whom I love is I. We are two spirits dwelling in one body. If you see me, you see Him; and seeing Him, you see us both."

Legend has it that his countrymen crucified Hallaj for his daring thoughts. "The day of my crucifixion," he said when his death sentence was pronounced, "will be the happiest of all the days of my life." For on that day, as he believed, he was to be merged with universal life. The legend further declares that his disciples prevailed upon the executioners to deliver to them his dead body. When they lifted the pall, they found only a cluster of roses underneath. They burned the roses into pure ashes that the winds might spread the perfume of his philosophy to all the corners of the earth.

A breath of this mystical philosophy drifted to India. The aim of the Hindu philosophers was to teach "the absorption of the many into the One." To this day the "Holy Sages" of India sit upon the riverbanks, "restraining heart and senses, silent, calm, immovable, devout—musing on God, lost in thought of God." This metaphysical company has—like many another religious or social creed—its lunatic fringe. Some of them, dressed in rags or only in a coat of ashes, squat cross-legged staring at their navels. Some of them keep gazing into the face of the sun until they go gradually blind. Some lie naked, year after year, upon beds of iron spikes. Some bury themselves in the earth up to their necks. Some hold up their arms into the air until birds build nests in the palms of their hands. But the great majority of them are simple, serious, unspectacular folk who try, through mental absorption, to understand the meaning of *Yoga*—the yoke that links the human to the divine.

The *Yoga* philosophy was the culmination of a long chain of development in Hindu thought. In the dawn of history we find the Hindus, like the other early children of the human race, steeped in the belief that all material things were alive. Stones, animals, trees, streams, mountains, lakes, tempests and clouds were possessed of spirits. The greatest spirit of them all was Agni, the God of Heavenly Fire, who "created the world in accordance with the Law of Life, and who maintained the stars in their courses and justice in the hearts of men."

At first Agni was bisexual—Male and Female in One. But this

lonely condition gave him no delight. "And so he caused his body to fall into two pieces, and therefrom arose a husband and a wife. He embraced her, and therefrom arose the first generation of human creatures." The two parts of the pro-creator then changed themselves into a bull and a cow, and out of their embrace arose the generation of cattle. And thus they went on, transforming themselves from one creature to another and giving life to all things, "even down to the ants." And Agni saw his work and was glad. "I, indeed, am creation, for everything has come out of me. I am the Parent of all things that exist."

Here we have another primitive hint that the Creator and his creation are one, and that the various forms of life are the outpourings of separate rivulets from one universal stream.

This germinal idea of the universal life-force comes to full development in the later Hindu philosophy of the *Upanishads* (a word compounded of *upa*, near, and *shad*, to sit). The *Upanishads* are a group of books—written over a period of three hundred years—which propose to unveil the secrets of life for the disciples who sit close to their master. "In the whole world," observed Schopenhauer, "there is no study so beneficial and so elevating as that of the *Upanishads*."

The beginning of wisdom, declare the sages of the *Upanishads*, is the acknowledgment of the inadequacy of our knowledge. How can the puny brain of man understand the infinite mind of God? "Not by learning can the Soul of the World be probed, not by genius and overmuch scanning of books . . . Seek not after a multitude of words, for this is mere vanity—a weariness of the tongue." Real understanding comes from *intuition*, spontaneous perception. "The pedant turns his senses outward, and sees death and decay; the wise man looks within himself, and sees eternal life."

And this eternal life which the philosopher beholds within himself is not his perishable body but his imperishable soul. This is "the Self of all selves, the Soul of all souls"—the all-pervading ocean of the Spirit which gathers up the finite raindrops of existence into infinite Being. It is only when we *forget* ourselves that we *find* ourselves.

For the individual is identical with the universal. Man lives upon this earth, not once but many times and in many forms. His soul

migrates from object to object in order to learn the lesson that *all* objects are but different aspects of *one* reality. Each living person is like a torch whose flame is handed down to another torch—that is, another receptacle for the selfsame living fire—until at last it melts into the all-embracing flame of immortal life.

Reality, then, is the *soul* of things, as revealed to the man who applies his insight to the solution of the riddle. All else—the external world of time and space—is merely a veil woven by our imperfect senses, a web of delusion, a mirage of the desert created in the imagination of men sick with the fever of material life.

Many of us, declare the sages of the *Upanishads*, have experienced those moments when the truth comes home to us in a revealing flash. At such moments—when we hear a noble melody or read an exalted poem or yield to the tenderness of love—we become ecstatic. That is, we are carried away from our separate selves and are made to feel at one with the undivided reality of life. These revelations are timeless, spaceless, supreme. They free us from the narrow membership of transitory tribes, and admit us into the citizenship of one living world.

While the Hindus regarded themselves as the citizens of heaven, their philosophical neighbors, the Chinese, were content to look upon themselves as the denizens of the earth. Of all the Oriental nations, they paid the least attention to metaphysics. One day a pupil of Confucius, the greatest of the Chinese philosophers, asked him, "What about death?" And Confucius answered, "When I know nothing about life, how can I know anything about death?" When another of his pupils inquired, "What is the essence of wisdom?" Confucius replied: "To do our duty to men and, while respecting God, to refrain from speculation about Him—this is the essence of wisdom."

Yet even Confucius was eager to understand the meaning of reality. "Tse," he said to one of his favorite disciples, "you think, I suppose, that my chief interest is to learn and to remember many things?"

"Yes," replied his disciple. "But perhaps I am wrong?"

"You *are* wrong," said Confucius. "I seek unity—the all-pervading immortal substance into which the many mortal things are absorbed."

Confucius, like Shelley, was forever anxious to find the divinity whose existence he denied. He was, to use a paradoxical expression, a God-intoxicated atheist.

"The Chinaman," observed Count Keyserling, "is perhaps the profoundest of all men." Confucius was but one of many saintly skeptics who concerned themselves with the "Essence of Wisdom." Prominent among them were Lao-tse, a humorist with an instinct for mysticism, and Chuang-tse, a mystic with a sense of humor. The humorist, like the mystic, sees the littleness of the part as compared with the grandeur of the whole. Both Lao-tse and his spiritual descendant, Chuang-tse, despised the "deceptive appearance" of things. "Once upon a time I, Chuang-tse, dreamt I was a butterfly, fluttering hither and thither . . . I was conscious only of following my fancies as a butterfly, and was unconscious of my individuality as a man. Suddenly I awoke, and there I lay, myself again. Now I do not know whether I was then a man dreaming that I was a butterfly, or whether I am now a butterfly dreaming that I am a man."

We must try, he declared, to pierce through the dream and aim at the reality. Once he refused a high office at the court of the Prince of Khu. He was fishing when the king's messenger brought him the offer. Without turning away from his fishing, he gave his answer.

"I have heard that in Khu there is a dead tortoise-shell, wrapped in a silk cloth, which the king keeps on an altar in his temple. Tell me, was it better for the tortoise to die and leave its shell to be thus honored? Or would it have been better for it to live, and to draw its tail after it over the mud?"

The messenger said, "It would have been better for the turtle to live, and to draw its tail after it over the mud."

"Go your ways," said Chuang. "I will keep on drawing my tail after me through the mud."

But Chuang, in his refusal to kill his soul in order that he might find honor in the palace of the king, did not draw his tail through the mud. Instead, he reached out with his fingertips toward the stars. And this was in keeping with his philosophy. All life, he said (following in the footsteps of Lao-tse), is a reaching out toward the Infinite. "The wise man's distinction is in understanding that all

things belong to one treasury"—the common storehouse of existence—"and that death and life should be viewed in the selfsame light." The parts of existence that we see as separate bodies and souls are ripples of one united and infinite ocean of life.

This infinite ocean, this cosmic rhythm that binds all things into a single singing harmony, is the mystic *Tao*—a term which can hardly be translated into human language. It means the unity of things—the ever-recurring and never-ending flow from the whole to the part, from the part to the whole—the law that keeps life forever on the surge from aspiration to fulfillment, from childhood to maturity, from old age forward to the youth of a renewed existence. In this rhythmic harmony of life, all opposites meet. It is beyond good and evil, beyond darkness and light. For good and evil, darkness and light, are the imperfect parts of a perfect whole—the discordant notes that harmonize into a concordant tune. Goodness, under *Tao*, is the overcoming of evil. Light is the conquest of darkness. Without the subdued, there can be no subduer. How should we know what *good* is until we have known what *evil* is? How should we know joy except as a contrast to—or still better, as a relief from—sorrow? It is the contrasting parts that make the unified whole, the two faces that make the shield, life and death that make for immortality.

Moreover—declared Chuang—all things observed are relative to the observer. "Hsi Shi was a beautiful woman. But when her features were reflected in the water, the fish were frightened away at the ugly sight." How do we know that what seems good to us may not seem evil to another, may not in reality *be* evil even to us? "How do I know that love of life is not a delusion and that the man who dreads to die is not like a child who has lost his way home? The lady Li Chi was the daughter of the border inspector of Ai. When the Prince of Chen first got possession of her, she wept until the bosom of her dress was drenched with tears. But when she came to his palace, shared with him his luxurious bed, and ate his grain and grass-fed meat, she regretted that she had wept. How do I know that the dead do not repent of their former craving for life? There is the Great Awakening, after which we shall know that this life was a dream."

Let us therefore, advised Chuang, "regard heaven and earth as a

great melting pot" in which the metal of existence is cast into various forms. And let us regard the "Author of Transformation as the Great Caster. And wherever we go, shall we not be at home?"

When Chuang was ready for his own "transformation," his disciples prepared for him an imposing funeral. But he told them to stop fussing. "With heaven and earth for my coffin, with the sun, moon and stars as my shroud, and with all creation to escort me to the grave—can any one ask for a more splendid funeral?" And when his disciples objected that if left unburied he would be eaten by the birds, he reassured them with an ironic smile: "Above ground I shall be food for kites; below, I shall be food for worms. Why rob the one to feed the other?"

The burial of his body was but another phase of the dream of his earthly life. He laid aside his dream with no fear in his heart. "Quiet shall be my sleep, and calm the awakening."

### *The Theories of the Early Greek Thinkers*

The early Greeks, like the early Orientals, believed that the material world was alive. But they had various theories as to what constituted the basis of this living world. The first of the Greek philosophers, Thales, declared that *Water* was the original substance out of which all things were created. Moisture, he said, is life; the absence of moisture, death. Living things grow out of the wet seed; dead things shrivel up into dry dust. When water evaporates, it becomes air and fire; when it congeals, it becomes ice and rock. Hence water is the underlying central principle which creates all things, from the subtle ether in the heavens to the solid mountains of the earth.

The Greeks admired this theory as expounded by "Father Thales," and acclaimed him as one of the Seven Wise Men of the ancient world. Many stories were told about his absent-mindedness, his subtle humor and his solid sense. It was related that one day, as he was busily observing the stars, he fell into a well. Whereupon Thratta, his maidservant, burst into laughter. "My master is so anxious to study the things over his head, he can't see the things under his feet."

But Thales was impervious to the jibes of his servants. Indeed,



he was impervious to everything in this world or in the next. "There is no difference," he said, "between life and death."

"Why, then," he was asked, "do you go on living? Why don't you die?"

"Because," he shrugged, "there's no difference."

The answers he gave to the questions of his disciples were always sharp and to the point. "What," he was asked, "is the easiest thing in the world?" "To advise others," he replied. "And what is the hardest thing?" "To advise yourself."

Thales was a wise philosopher and, when the occasion demanded, a shrewd business man. Once, to prove that even wisdom need not be estranged from wealth, he cornered the olive market and cleaned up a fortune to the amazement of the professional speculators of the day.

Yet his own speculations were largely concerned not with silver or gold, but with the real substance of the world. Even the precious metals, he declared, are but temporary playthings created out of water and destined ultimately to be turned back into water. This divine living liquid, he said, is at once the principle and the meaning of all creation.

The philosophers who followed Thales continued his speculations as to the ultimate principle of the universe. His pupil, Anaximander, believed that this original principle was not water, but a certain subtle substance which he called the *Infinite*. Out of this Infinite, forever alive and forever in motion, came the heavens and the waters. And out of the waters, as they were evaporated by the sun, came the first living creatures of the sea—here we have the earliest European intimation of the Darwinian theory—and their evolutionary descendants, the birds and the animals, until they arrived at their final and most perfect creation, Man.

And thus out of the Infinite—a mixture of all sorts of conflicting and combining elements—arose fire and water, earth and air, sun, stars, moon, animals and men. And, after their allotted span of life, all these objects of heaven and earth will return to their original Mother, the Infinite. For birth and life and death are a cycle—that is, a circular motion. In this continual revolution of the cycle of existence, worlds come and go. But the Infinite goes on forever.

Next after Anaximander in the procession of the Greek philoso-

phers came Anaximenes. To him the elemental substance of the universe appeared to be *Air*. This was but another name for the *Infinite*. For the *Air* of Anaximenes has the same general qualities as the *Infinite* of Anaximander. It is boundless and timeless; and in its eternal motion it condenses into wind, cloud, water, earth, metal and stone. All these "solid condensations" of the *Air* constitute the *body* of the world. But in its original and eternal aspect, the *Air* is the essential *soul* of the world.

All the foregoing theories of the earlier Greek thinkers are summarized in a single sentence in the work of the next Greek philosopher, Xenophanes: "The underlying principle of the universe is God." God is identical with the Living Water of Thales, the *Infinite* of Anaximander, and the Divine *Air* of Anaximenes. "God is One, without beginning or middle or end." He is the Mind which *governs* the world, and the Body which *is* the world. Xenophanes ridiculed the popular representation of God as the enlarged figure of a man. "Why, if cattle or horses or lions had hands and could paint with their hands . . . the horses would paint the forms of gods like horses, and the cattle like cattle, and each would give them bodies like his own." This utterance of Xenophanes inspired Voltaire to one of his immortal witticisms: "God created man in his own image, and man responded by returning the compliment."

The God of Xenophanes, the First Principle of creation, does not resemble mortals either "in shape or in raiment or in voice or in mind." On the contrary, He is all shapes, all raiments, all voices and all minds in one. "Without labor He sets all things in motion." For "all of Him sees, all thinks, all hears, all acts." God is All-in-All, All-in-One. And the world is but the concrete reproduction of His thought—the poem written in syllables of earth and fire so that they who have eyes may read.

But—objected his successor Heraclitus, "the weeping philosopher"—our eyes are bad witnesses. Those who rely upon the evidence of their eyes "know many things but understand nothing." Let us rather regard the world with the inner vision of the mind—and what do we see? Nothing but eternal change—a continual disintegration of smoke pouring out of an eternal fire. This eternal fire is the seed out of which all things grow and the furnace into which all things return. Nothing is permanent. Even the most solid ob-

jects are as fleeting as the wind-blown images in a cloud of vapor. And what causes these fleeting images? The law of everlasting strife. "Through strife all things arise and pass away . . . War is the father and king of all." This law (of universal strife) "is the same for all things . . . It always was, and is, and shall be."

Heraclitus was one of the earliest atheists in history. "This world of ours, neither any god nor any man shaped it . . . There is only the flaming thunderbolt that tears asunder and puts together all things." And this tearing asunder and putting together go on without a let-up forever. There is no such thing as stability in this world. Nothing remains even for two moments the same. "You may not enter the same river twice; for the new waters ever replace the old." The whole universe, indeed, is an ever-changing current of hostile elements. And it is through the clash of these hostile elements that all things are born. Life is a harmony made up of conflicting notes.

Yet this harmony, when the final conflict is resolved, is a perfect whole. Man and nature—here again we find, even in this atheistic philosophy, the ancient concept of divine unity—are ultimately bound together into a single undivided living soul. "It is wise, listening not to me but to the Truth, to acknowledge that all things are one."

Yes, agreed the next philosopher, Empedocles, all things are one. And they are brought into unity through strife and one other principle—love. Love is the "cement of harmony" that holds the world together. And in this harmonious unity there is no such thing as creation or destruction. For something cannot be created out of nothing, and something cannot be decomposed into nothing. That which we call creation or destruction, life or death, is merely a rearrangement of ever-living material into a new order.

This living material, declared Empedocles, consists of four elements—fire, air, water, and earth. These elements, or particles, are the "roots" of things. Out of their various combinations arise all the objects of the world.

And these objects arise—another step toward the Darwinian theory—through the medium of selection. Nature experiments with all sorts of organisms. Some creatures, in this experimental process, "grew with neckless heads; some, with double faces and double

chests; ox-things with men's faces; and contrariwise there sprang up ox-headed men." And those organisms that adapted themselves to their environment were able to survive; but those that failed to adapt themselves were weeded out. Thus the survival of the fittest became the determining factor in the struggle for existence, until finally nature produced the animals and the men most closely attuned to the world in which they lived.

And thus we go on from philosopher to philosopher, each of them inspired with the dawning light of some later truth, until we come to Leucippus and Democritus, the founders of the atomic theory. The substance of the universe, they said, consists neither of one element nor of four elements, but of an infinite number of elements called *atoms*—that is, particles so small that they can no longer be divided into lesser particles. "And following," declared Leucippus, "is the manner in which the indivisible particles are formed into oceans and mountains and stars and men and gods: In a given section (of the universe) atoms of all sorts and shapes are carried from the unlimited (storehouse) into the vast empty space. These atoms collect together and form a single vortex—like snowflakes in a blizzard—in which they jostle against one another and separate off, by like atoms attaching themselves to like . . . And in the course of this entanglement they form a spherical system"—here we have a prevision of Laplace's nebular hypothesis—"the heavier and slower atoms coalescing into the substance of the earth, and the lighter and speedier atoms bursting into the fire of the stars."

And all these atoms are *automotive*—that is, they are endowed with a self-moving power—and they are alive. Leucippus and Democritus were not, as some modern writers assert, crass materialists. We have the evidence of Aristotle to the contrary. "Democritus," writes Aristotle, "asserts that it is the soul in the atoms which imparts motion to them. The position of Leucippus," adds Aristotle, "is similar."

From this sort of living materialism it is but a step to the living idealism of Plato.

*The Views of Socrates and Plato*

It is hard to distinguish between the philosophy of Plato and that of his teacher, Socrates. For Plato represented his ideas in the form of dramatic dialogues in which Socrates was the leading actor, so that to this day we don't know just where the thought of Socrates leaves off and the thought of Plato begins. In this book, to avoid confusion, we shall ascribe to Plato all the words which he puts into the mouth of Socrates.

Like his philosophical predecessors, Plato was deeply concerned with the nature of the world. He set forth his views on this subject in the *Timaeus*—a dialogue which, next to the *Republic*, exercised perhaps the greatest influence of all his writings upon ancient and medieval thought. "God," declared Plato, "created the world because He was good, and desired that all things should be like Himself." He built it, as an architect builds a temple, in accordance with a pattern that existed in His mind. It is the best of all possible worlds because it is the copy of a plan which is the best of all possible plans. "And when the Father who begat the world saw the image which He had made, He rejoiced."

This image of His mind, the world in which we live, has a visible body and an invisible soul. The body is temporary; the soul, eternal. (Time, to Plato, is the shadow of eternity.) The body is full of imperfections; the soul is perfect. Every object in the world, and every living creature from the highest angel in the heavens to the lowest animal of the earth, is possessed of a perishable body and an imperishable soul.

Yet the bodies and the souls of the angels are composed of finer substance than the bodies and the souls of men. For God created men out of the material left over when He had finished creating the angels. Man is thus the remnant of an angel.

But he has within himself the makings of a god. For the Creator "gave us the faculty of sight that we might behold the order of the heavens and create a corresponding order in our own erring minds." And we can create this order, observes Plato, through the study of philosophy, "than which no greater good ever was or will be given by the gods to mortal man."

Yet many mortals have eyes and they see not, ears and they hear not, minds and they think not. In spite of the lessons taught us by the stars, those flaming syllables that interpret the orderly thoughts of God, many of us prefer turmoil to tranquillity, foolishness to wisdom, ill feeling to good will. Such people, at their death, receive the proper punishment for their misdeeds. Instead of returning to heaven, their natural habitation, they are sent back to serve another lifetime within the prison-walls of the earth. Those men who have yielded to contentiousness in their first life are in their second life transformed into women—Plato the bachelor must have been rather unfortunate in his feminine contacts. Those who have led a flighty, irresponsible life are changed into birds. And so on—the stupid among mortals assuming the bodies of asses, the swinish becoming translated into pigs, the snarling into dogs and the stealthy into mice—each of them reincarnated into that animal “which most closely resembled him in his evil ways; until finally, with the help of reason, he shall have been restored to the form of his first and better nature.”

For the first nature of man is akin to the nature of the gods. “There is a divinity within us which God has lodged in our heads, to raise us . . . from earth to heaven.” This dwelling place of the immortals among the stars, declared Plato, was known to us before our birth and is waiting for the pure among us after our death.

In the philosophy of Plato, death is the transition between life the shadow, and immortality the substance. It is the door that leads us into the eternal and *ideal* world of which the temporary and *material* world is but a copy.

And this brings us to one of the most fascinating subjects in all philosophy—the Platonic theory of Ideas. There are, said Plato, two worlds: the unreal world as it appears to our senses, and the real world as it exists in the realm of ideas. Every object in the unreal world—the world in which we live—is the impermanent copy of a permanent idea. Thus, there is but a single, unchangeable, eternal and perfect idea of Man; but there have been and there will be innumerable, changeable, ephemeral and imperfect copies of this idea of *Man* fashioned out of matter into the forms of *men*. So, too, there is one perfect idea of a rose bush, but there are millions of rose bushes; one perfect idea of goodness, but millions of good

deeds. A person, a thing, a quality is created whenever the eternal pattern of that person or thing or quality comes into contact with matter—the raw stuff out of which the Sculptor of the Universe translates His ideas into forms. To illustrate this point, let us regard the Idea as a shining light surrounded by myriads of mirrors—some of them convex, some concave, some smooth, some rough, some broken, some whole. All these mirrors reflect the images of the central light. Yet no two reflections are the same, for every one of these images depends upon the nature of the reflecting surface. Furthermore, all these reflected images are unreal. They are mere appearances—copies of the shining light, objects that seem real but are only shadows of the one perfect reality in the center.

And now suppose that one of the mirrors is suddenly smashed. The light in that mirror has disappeared. "It is," we are wont to say, "dead."

But no, it is only the *reflection* that appears to have died. The material that temporarily *shaped* the reflection is gone. But the light which *caused* the reflection keeps shining on as gloriously as ever.

Our senses, declares Plato, deceive us. They observe only the world of appearances. It is the intellect alone that can teach us to understand reality—that is, the realm of Ideas which serve as the permanent basis for all transitory appearances. Those who rely upon the evidence of their senses, he declared, are like men imprisoned in a cave which has a mouth open toward the light. But the prisoners cannot see the light. "For they have their legs and their necks chained with their faces turned away from the light, so that they are unable to move. Thus they can only see before them, being prevented by the chains from moving their heads either to the right or to the left . . . Behind and above them, at the mouth of the cave, there is a blazing fire; and in front of them there is a blank wall." And between the fire and the backs of the prisoners there is an "endless procession of men carrying all sorts of vessels, and statues and figures of animals made of wood and stone and various materials which cast a moving shadow upon the wall in front." And the prisoners, condemned to keep their eyes forever fixed upon this wall, can see the shadows of the moving objects, but they cannot see the objects that *produce* these shadows. Indeed, they cannot

even see themselves. They can merely see their own shadows along with all the other shadows. These they regard as real, for they do not know any better. But now and then, asserts Plato, a philosopher escapes from the cavern of shadows and beholds, to his great delight, the outer world of things-in-themselves.

The eternal world of Ideas. The resplendent patterns of all created material things. The Platonic Idea is somewhat akin to a mathematical law. The engineer spans a river with a concrete bridge of stone and steel and cables and arches. This bridge is the material product of the Idea in the engineer's mind—the *physical image* of the mechanical and mathematical laws of balance and cohesion and strength. The bridge is transitory, the laws are eternal. They existed before the first bridge was built; they shall exist after the last bridge shall have been destroyed. The world of solid bridges—the world perceived by the senses—is a world of passing shadows. But the world of abstract Ideas—the world apprehended by the mind—is a world of permanent reality.

The Idea's the thing. And first and most important of all the Ideas in God's mind when He created the world was the Idea of Justice. That is, the Idea of Harmony—the law of moral and mathematical balance between part and part, and between the parts and the whole. The same delicate adjustment—Plato would call it *the same spirit of justice*—that prevails in the building of a good bridge must also prevail in the building of a good nation, of a good world. The same Idea, the same Law, that impels the planets and the stars to move together in a concerted unit, will ultimately impel the members of a city, a state, the entire human race to move together in a concordance of united friendship. For men and the stars are akin in their music and their motions and their laws. All of them alike are the emanations of the Sublime Idea of God.

### *Aristotle's Picture of the Universe*

"Aristotle's metaphysics," observes Bertrand Russell, "may be described as Plato diluted by common sense." It would be more appropriate, I believe, to say that Aristotle's metaphysics represents Plato's imaginative fire choked up by the ashes of prosaic scholarship. For Aristotle, one of the world's greatest philosophers, was



one of the world's worst poets. He was cold, critical, systematic, pedestrian, precise. He had everything but inspiration.

Yet it was Aristotle who established metaphysics—the study of the riddle of existence—as a distinct branch of philosophy. The word *Metaphysics* means *After Physics*. This word, however, had no mystical connotation for Aristotle or for his editors. They used it merely as a title for the book which, in the arrangement of his works for publication, came after his book on physics.

And his treatment of the subject is as frigid as his title. His scintillating ideas illumine the mind, but they fail to warm the heart. He takes the Platonic ideas out of heaven and brings them down to earth.

Like Plato, Aristotle believed in the realm of ideas and in the existence of matter. But, unlike Plato, he maintained that ideas—he preferred to call them “forms”—existed not *outside* but *inside* the material objects of the world. Form and matter are inseparable. Everything consists of these two realities: form which has grown out of matter, and matter which is growing into form. For matter is always in the process of transformation. Everything is moved by an inborn compulsion to become something greater. Thus the acorn has within it the urge to become an oak tree; the embryo, the urge to become a child; the child, a man. In other words, the material of the acorn has within it the form (or the idea) of the tree; the material of the embryo, the form of the child; the material of the child, the form of the man. Form is the principle of growth that resides in everything—the shape of the thing as it is, and the shaping of the thing into which it is to develop. James Russell Lowell has well expressed this thought:

Every clod feels a stir of might,  
An *instinct within it* that reaches and towers,  
And groping blindly above it for light,  
Climbs to a soul in grass and flowers.

This *inner instinct* for growth, this urgent idea or pattern which resides in every object, is the purpose of the universe—the fulfillment of matter through the medium of form. When matter opposes its formative purpose—that is, when there is no harmony between the body and the spirit of an object, then nature records one

of its futilities and failures. Hence arise the monsters, the evils, the wars of the world. But the tendency of matter in the long run is to subserve form, the tendency of the world is to be true to its design, the movement of mankind is to develop better men.

And the Final Cause of all this movement and all this growth is God. In the metaphysics of Aristotle, God is not the Creator of the world but the Principle of its motion. For a creator is a dreamer, and a dreamer is a dissatisfied personality, an unhappy spirit who seeks for happiness, an imperfect being who aims at perfection. But God is perfect; and since He is perfect, He cannot be dissatisfied or unhappy. He is therefore not given to dreams—those evanescent shapes of things too good to be true. God, believed Aristotle, is not a poet but a scientist—not the *Maker* but the *Mover* of the universe.

But what sort of Mover? To this question, Aristotle gives a peculiar answer: Since God is the primary source of motion, He is therefore the *Unmoved Mover* of the universe. Every other source of motion, whether it be a person or a thing or a thought, is (according to Aristotle) a *moved mover*; it is impelled by something to move something else. Thus the plow moves the soil, the hand moves the plow, the brain moves the hand, the desire for food moves the brain, the instinct for life moves the desire for food, and so on and on. In other words, the cause of every motion is the result of some other motion. The master of every slave is the slave of some other master. Even the absolute tyrant is the slave of—that is, he is moved by—his ambition. But God cannot be the result of any prior motion. He can be the slave of no master. He is the source of all motion, the master of all masters, the instigator of all thought, the Unmoved Mover of the world.

Furthermore, God is not interested in the world, though the world is interested in God. For to be interested in the world means to be subject to emotion, to be swayed by prayers or imprecations, to be capable of changing one's mind as a result of somebody else's actions or desires or thoughts—in short, to be imperfect. But God is passionless, inaccessible, changeless, perfect. He moves everything, but is moved by nothing.

But—the question arises—if God is motionless, how can He be the cause of all motion? To this question Aristotle replies: "God moves the world as the beloved object moves the lover." Let us

suppose a beautiful woman sitting in a drawing-room. She is perfectly absorbed in her own thoughts. She looks at nobody. But everybody looks at her. The presence of her beauty has turned all eyes, has stirred all hearts into action, all minds into thought. Such is the nature of the beauty of God. Without being moved itself, "it produces motion within us all by being loved."

The Aristotelian God, then, is the final cause of all motion, the Form of the universe, the progressive cultivation of life, the inherent instinct for growth, the purpose which all things and all persons are forever striving to attain. Aristotle's God, in short, is little more than Plato's Principle of Mechanics. Worshipped by all men but indifferent to their fate, he is a cold, impersonal, timeless, spaceless and sexless mathematical formula. He resembles the Primal Energy of the scientists rather than the Heavenly Father of the poets. Plato has given us a world of Ideas *plus* a Compassionate Friend to guide us. The best that Aristotle can give us is a system of dispassionate Ideas without a guide.

### *The Material World of Epicurus*

Epicurus was the first unqualified materialist in the history of European philosophy. Life—he declared—is not the designed plan of a divine artist. It is an accident in a mechanical universe. But we can make it, if we will, a *happy* or at least an *interesting* accident.

And how can we do this? By driving out of our heads the two great terrors that have enslaved the human race: the fear of the gods, and the fear of death.

We have nothing to fear from the gods because—asserted Epicurus—the gods are not our masters. They have no power over us since they have not created us. Indeed, they have not created anything. The entire universe is nothing more than the haphazard result of the movement of atoms through infinite space.

Epicurus borrowed his atomic theory from Democritus. But he borrowed it only in part. He accepted the material universe of Democritus; but he rejected the theory of the soul which, according to his predecessor, resided in all matter. We have now advanced from the wonder-world of the early Greek thinkers to the matter-of-fact world of what may be called the adolescence of Greek

thought. To the child, every mechanical toy is imbued with life. To the adolescent, even life is nothing but a mechanical toy. All space, maintained Epicurus, is filled with material atoms—an infinite collection of “bricks” out of which universes are built. These atoms are beginningless, endless, immutable. They move eternally downward through infinite space. But now and then they swerve in their downward motion, like raindrops whirled into eddies by a gust of wind. And as they are whirled together they collide and thus become kneaded together into the substance of stars and planets and moons and suns and universes.

Now these atoms are of different weights and shapes and sizes. And these differences account for the infinite variety of things that go into the making of the world.

But our world, continued Epicurus, is not the only one in existence. There are others equally vast and equally complete. They, too, have their earths, with their mountains and oceans, and their races of men and generations of wild beasts. We are not the only pebbles on the beach of the infinite sea; for the atoms come into the same kinds of combinations, under the same sorts of conditions, over and over again as they whirl forever downward through the endless aisles of space.

And all this whirling movement, asserted Epicurus, is spontaneous. There is no hand to direct it. For even the gods are the mechanical creatures of the atomic flux. They are made of finer, more subtle sorts of atoms than those which go into the making of men. They live in their vast heaven, the cloudless kingdom beyond the stars. Here they enjoy a blessed existence without a care of their own or a concern about the joys and the sorrows and the struggles of mankind.

The gods have had nothing to do with our creation, and they are utterly indifferent to our fate. The life of man, believed Epicurus, is too crazy a farce to have originated in the mind of a sane Dramatist. No rational God, he said, would order a temple to be built in his honor and then allow it to be struck down with his own lightning. No merciful Providence would nurse a young man through a dangerous illness only to expose him to a more horrible death on the battlefield. “Untroubled themselves, the gods are infinitely removed from the troubles of men.”

But if the gods do not trouble themselves about men, why should men trouble themselves about the gods? Because, replied Epicurus, if men try to become more divine, they will succeed in becoming more human. By worshiping the gods, we make ourselves more godlike—more refined, more indifferent to the buffetings of fate and the vicissitudes of life. True religion, therefore, does not consist in sacrifice or superstition or fear. It consists rather in a respectable imitation of the gods—that is, in “the contemplation of the nature of the world with a tranquil mind.”

We must therefore, said Epicurus, be ever unafraid. For, whatever sufferings may come to us in life, there will be no suffering in death. To every painful event let us say, “This too shall pass.” Death is the ending of all existence, all disquietude, all pain. The soul, like the body, is mortal. For the soul, too, is a compound of atoms—a sort of liquid energy that fills the body as water fills a pitcher. So long as the body lasts, the soul is held together. But when the body breaks, the liquid soul spills out and is dissolved into the isolated drops of its individual atoms. The soul was born with the birth of the body, and it dies with its death.

But instead of lamenting this fact, we should rather rejoice in it. For there is no consciousness after death, no continuation of the nightmare of our life, no punishment in hell for any errors that we may have committed during the commotion of our earthly existence. The impersonal atoms move restlessly on forever, but the individual personality is submerged into an eternal rest.

This, in brief, is the materialistic world of Epicurus. A very interesting theory, yet it fails to convince the mind because of two important omissions. In the first place, it doesn't explain how the movement of dead matter can produce life. In the second place, it doesn't account for the original principle of motion. *What* causes the atoms to move? And *Who* causes them to move? And *Why*? As a European scholar somewhat unfamiliar with the English language has naïvely expressed it, “If the world revolves, where is the revolver?”

### *The World of the Cynics and the Skeptics*

The idealism of Plato on the one hand, and the materialism of Democritus and of Epicurus on the other, were equally distasteful

to a number of philosophers who believed that we have no right to make a positive assertion about the world. All we can say—they maintained—is that we do not understand its nature. Of this number of dissenters, some called themselves *Cynics*; others, *Skeptics*.

The word *cynic* means *canine*—a nickname which the critics bestowed upon the founder of this school, Diogenes, because “he lived like a dog.” The father of Diogenes, a dishonest moneylender, had been sentenced to prison for “defacing the coinage.” The disgrace of the father embittered the son. “I, too,” he declared, “shall spend my life in defacing the coinage—the false coinage of human thought.” All the conceptions of the world, all the conventions of men—the fripperies of rank, the titles of honor, the worship of wealth—“are nothing but base metal and counterfeit coin.” Diogenes would have nothing to do with this fraudulent currency that passed for worldly wisdom. He dressed himself in rags and settled down to live in a tub. One day Alexander the Great paid a visit to Diogenes. “Is there anything I can do for you?” asked Alexander. “Yes,” replied Diogenes, “you can stand out of my light.”

Yet the light of Diogenes, and of all the Cynics, was a nebulous flicker of uncertainty. “The philosopher is no nearer than the man in the street to the solution of the cosmic mystery.” And since they were unable to understand the world, the Cynics proceeded to despise it. They condemned all its evil elements, such as slavery, injustice, persecution, brutality, corruption and war. But along with its evils they also denounced a number of its *good* features, including marriage, art, literature, philosophy, science, government, religion and law. Above all, they snarled at every kind of pleasure. “If I had my choice,” said Antisthenes, one of the leading Cynics, “I would rather be mad than glad.”

“And I,” observed Pyrrho, the founder of the skeptical school, “would rather be glad than mad.” The Skeptics, like the Cynics, believed that nothing definite can ever be ascertained by the human mind. “What’s past is a mere shadow. What’s to come is still unsure. Let us therefore enjoy the present.”

The Skeptics, by their own admission, were the arch-hypocrites of the ancient world. They never practiced what they preached. For all preaching, they declared, is dogmatic; and it is wrong for anyone to be dogmatic about anything. “In thought,” said the Skeptic

Carneades, "we question the existence of the gods; but in practice we offer worship to them." For, in a world of uncertainty, it is much more practical to swim *with* rather than *against* the popular currents of the day. "Since there is no logic in *either* course, let us wisely accept the *easier* course."

This skeptical philosophy enjoyed a great vogue in the decadent period of Greek and in the aggressive period of Roman history. For it is the philosophy of a man's second as well as of his first childhood. It comforts the laziness of old age and it condones the cruelty of youth. "Since life is so brief and God is a myth, let us enjoy our moment in the sun. And let us spread ourselves out so that we may not have to share the warmth with our fellow men."

But skepticism, "the philosophy for the unphilosophical mind," was contrary to the spirit of mature and thoughtful men. Life must have a meaning; otherwise we shouldn't have been born with so passionate a hunger to seek it out. After their temporary drift in the direction of a baseless and valueless world, the philosophers returned to their everlasting quest. And so, when the skeptical Pontius Pilate inquired, "What is truth?" two groups of thinkers attempted to give him the answer.

These two groups were the Stoics and the Christians.

### *The Soul-Flame of the Stoics*

When the Greeks under Alexander made the material conquest of the Orient, the Orient in reprisal made the spiritual conquest of the Greeks. A torrent of mystical cults came pouring out of the East into the West. Most influential among these cults before the advent of Christianity was the Stoicism introduced into Athens by the Phoenician merchant-philosopher, Zeno.

The philosophy of Zeno found a ready soil in a country which, in its infancy, had caught a vision of heaven. For Zeno, like the earliest of the Greek philosophers, believed in a world with a living soul.

"But this soul, like the body," said Zeno, "is material. Everything in the world is material, solid, real. The table, the tree, the river, the stars, the principle of motion, the quality of mercy, the law of justice, God—all these are concrete objects of living matter."

And these objects have come into being not by chance, but by a divine plan. Originally there was nothing but cosmic fire—the soul-flame of the world. Out of this fire the universe arose, and into this fire it will return after its appointed cycle of existence.

But this is merely one of an endless succession of cycles in the perennial wheel of creation. Everything is forever repeated. Nothing is ever new. Whatever happens today has happened in the past, and will happen in the future over and over again.

And everything that happens has been ordained by a merciful Providence. Whatever is, is right. All creatures are born for a definite purpose. And what is this purpose? "To live in accordance with Nature." To act in harmony—here we find the inspiration of Plato—with the will of God.

God, according to the Stoics, is "the fiery Soul or Mind of the world." His design pervades the universe "as honey pervades the honeycomb." He is the Supreme Father of creation, and its Supreme Law. "Nature, Providence, Reason, Destiny, God—all these terms describe the selfsame Eternal Truth."

The Stoics did not believe in free will. Our thoughts, our acts, our hopes, our very lives—they declared—are the instruments of Destiny. One day Zeno, though he was opposed to slavery, flogged his slave for some offense. "Pray forgive me, master," begged the slave. "For by your philosophy I have been destined from all eternity to commit this offense." "Quite true," replied Zeno. "But by the same philosophy I have been destined from all eternity to flog you for this offense."

We must all submit to Destiny as a good citizen submits to the law of the land. But to yield to our Destiny means to be at one with God, to accept our allotted station as God's kinsmen—related members of a single human family. "My country, so far as I am a Roman," said the Stoic emperor, Marcus Aurelius, "is Italy. But so far as I am a man, it is the world."

This conception of the Stoic philosophy brings us close to the Christian doctrine of the Brotherhood of Man under the Fatherhood of God.



*The Metaphysics of Christianity*

Christian philosophy represented the marriage between the Platonic Idea and the Hebraic God. And Stoicism provided the mystical word that consecrated the union.

This binding word of the Christian as well as of the Stoic doctrine is *duty*—that which is due from Man, the divine part, to God, the divine whole. The idea is beautifully expressed in the prayer of the Stoic philosopher, Cleanthes:

Lead me, O Zeus, and thou, O Destiny,  
Lead thou me on.  
To whatsoever task thou sendest me,  
Lead thou me on.  
I follow fearless, or, if in mistrust  
I lag and will not, follow still I must.

Led by our destiny, we are bound to follow the will of God—to direct our gaze from the shadow world of appearances to the substantial world of Ideas, from the confusion of the earth to the Kingdom of Heaven. Moses, Plato and Cleanthes are the three spiritual godfathers of the Christian philosopher, Saint Augustine.

But the immediate inspiration of Saint Augustine was Plotinus, the interpreter of Plato, who flourished in the third century A.D. "Plato's system," wrote Saint Augustine, "is the most pure and bright in all philosophy. And in Plotinus," he added, "Plato lived again."

The metaphysics of Plotinus is founded upon a Holy Trinity—the One, the Spirit, and the Soul.

The One—which is the Highest Essence of Plotinus's Trinity—is God, or the Ultimate Good. He transcends all earthly existence, all things, all thoughts. No human mind can encompass Him, and no human words can define Him. The only language that can even begin to understand Him is the language of silent contemplation. Plotinus tells us that he sometimes experienced those silent, ecstatic, contemplative moods when, "lifted out of the body into myself . . . I attained identity with the divine."

But such moods were rare. More often Plotinus found himself in a mental state that carried him down from the contemplation of God to the comprehension of the Spirit. The term that Plotinus uses to signify the Spirit is *Nous*—a word hard to translate into English. It means *Spirit*, plus *Intelligence*, plus *Reason*, plus *Mind*. With this broader understanding of the word *Nous*, the Second Essence of Plotinus's Trinity, we shall continue to refer to it as the *Spirit*, for want of a better term. The Spirit is not only the Image of God in the material world. It is also the Intelligence that emanates from God as the light emanates from the sun, the Reason that ordains the world in conformity with God's will, and the Mind that directs the thinking of man to the interpretation of God's law.

And so, Plotinus tells us, he is carried in his less ecstatic moments down from the pinnacle of God to the lower heights of the Spirit. But there are other moments when his vision, though still far above the level of earthly understanding, has nevertheless descended to the Third Essence of the Holy Trinity—the Soul.

The Soul, observes Plotinus, is an emanation from the Spirit just as the Spirit is an emanation from God. It creates the material world out of its memory of the divine. And what is the motive for this creation? An eternal hunger, an irresistible desire "to elaborate order on the model of what it has seen in the world of the Spirit." The Soul is like a composer who has caught the vision of a great symphony. This vision will not let him rest until he has translated his divine idea into human sound. "Heard songs," John Keats reminds us, "are sweet; but those unheard are sweeter." The ceaseless effort of the Soul is to create a world that shall approximate the vision which has entranced it—to make the *real* as sublime as the *ideal*.

This philosophy of Plotinus was the final stepping-stone to the Scholastic philosophy of the Church. "Plotinus," observes Bertrand Russell, "is both an end and a beginning—an end as regards the Greeks, a beginning as regards Christendom."

The Christian philosophers accepted the Hebraic concept of the world's creation. But they went beyond this concept to the Platonic idea of two worlds, the Stoic doctrine of a divine relationship between God and man, and the Holy Trinity of Plotinus.

God, said Saint Augustine, the greatest of the early Christian

philosophers, is eternal. In Him there is no past or future, but only an everlasting present. The word *time* has no meaning as applied to the existence of God. For God created time when He created the world. He exists out of time, just as He exists out of space.

"What, then, is time?" Saint Augustine's answer to this question is an interesting forecast of the modern theory of relativity. Time, he declares, is subjective rather than objective. It exists *within*, and not *outside of*, the human mind. Time is not a matter of duration, but a momentary sensation. We can sense only the present instant. What we call yesterday and tomorrow are really parts of today. Yesterday is today's memory of the past; tomorrow is today's expectation of the future. The human mind, because of its relative limitations, has developed a three-fold conception of the present. We talk of the past and the present and the future. What we mean—declares Saint Augustine—is that *all these three points of time are present*. There is "a present of things past, a present of things present, and a present of things future."

In order to clarify this idea, the modern Russian philosopher Ouspensky compares the observer of time to a man riding in an airplane between—let us say—Washington and New York. The rider at this moment is over Baltimore, the present. Behind him is Washington, the past. Before him is New York, the future. It is wrong to say that Washington *was*, Baltimore *is*, and New York *will be*. All three of them at this moment *are*.

Time, therefore, is a finite mental image of an infinite eternity. And the human world is a finite mental image of the divine world. The City of Man is a transitory copy of the City of God.

We are pilgrims, said Augustine, in the City of Man, but citizens in the City of God. The City of Man may be sacked by the enemy as Rome was sacked by the Goths. But the City of God—that is, the Kingdom of Heaven—remains eternally unassailed. Let no one grieve over the destruction of his temporary home. For his permanent home, if only he is virtuous, is ready and waiting for his arrival. There is no expiration to the good man's lease on Heaven. Have you lost your goods, your savings, your life? Never mind. You have not lost your soul. For that is indestructible. Has your virgin daughter, in the capture of your city, submitted to the coercion of rape? God will forgive her, provided she has not also sub-

mitted to the *pleasure* of rape. For compulsory sin unenjoyed is no sin at all.

In any event, and under all conditions, rely upon the guidance of God. Try to submerge the material part of yourself that the spiritual part may emerge. Chastise the body for the salvation of the soul. For the soul is ever trying to return to the divine from which it came.

The divinity of the soul, observed the Christian philosopher, John Scot, is derived from its relationship to God. In his book, *On the Division of Nature*, Scot remarks that "God created the world out of Himself." The substance of all finite things is God, the Infinite. No creature exists apart from Him. Our goodness is His justice; our order, His wisdom; our movement, His life. And these three attributes, declared John Scot, constitute the (pantheistic) Trinity of God. His justice is the Father; His wisdom, the Son; His life, the Holy Ghost.

And thus John Scot reconciled the revelation of the New Testament with the philosophy of the Stoics and the theology of Plotinus. But, the legends tell us, he was not popular with the Fathers of the Church. For he paid less attention to revelation than he did to reason. "Both reason and revelation are sources of the same truth, and therefore they cannot conflict. But if ever they *seem* to conflict, I choose reason as my guide."

John Scot had a cutting wit—he was an Irishman. One day at a banquet he sat opposite King Charles the Bald, a man rather fond of the bottle. "Tell me," said Charles, "what separates a Scot from a sot?" "Just the width of the table, Sire," replied the philosopher. It is probably true, as the legends further inform us, that he died at the hands of the monks because of his "too ready tongue."

The philosophy of John Scot, though essentially Christian, gave way to the more orthodox theory of Saint Thomas Aquinas—the "angelic doctor" of Christian metaphysics. To this day his doctrine is accepted as *the* doctrine in Catholic institutions that offer courses on philosophy. For Aquinas enthroned revelation above reason. To be more exact, he used reason as a servant to establish the mastery of revelation. In his metaphysics he follows Aristotle rather than Plato. God, he said, is the Unmoved Mover of the world, the First Cause of all motion, all creation, all life. Aristotle had represented

the creation of the universe as energy translated into matter; Aquinas represented it as the Word translated into flesh.

This translation of energy into matter, of the Word into flesh, was not a single act of the past, but is a continuous process of all time. However, to the omniscient Mind of God who lives *outside* of time, all time is an eternal present—here we have an echo of Saint Augustine. God therefore knows all that ever was, all that ever is, all that ever will be. Just as the statue exists in the mind of the sculptor before it is embodied in marble, so do the generations of men exist in the Mind of the Creator before they are embodied in flesh.

And God creates all things because He is all gladness, all goodness, all love. This idea of the creation of the world through the love of God seems more Platonic than Aristotelian. Aquinas was a warmer personality than Aristotle. Hence the God of Aquinas is a more sympathetic Being than the God of Aristotle. All philosophers depict God after their own image.

Furthermore, there is a contradiction between Aristotle's God, the Unmoved Mover, and Aquinas's God, the Creative Lover. For love is an emotion, hence a *form of motion*. God is *moved* through love to translate His divine Word into human flesh. But Aquinas, after his contradictory lapse into Platonism, whom he considers merely "another theorist," returns once more to Aristotle, to whom he refers as "The Philosopher." God's love, he maintains, is not a temporary action but an eternal contemplation. It is the unerring comprehension of all things, within a single instant. And all things, under the sleepless eye of God, are trying to become as like Him as possible.

Life, then, is a continual striving toward perfection. And all creation is an impulsive imitation of the divine. For God wills it so, and His will is the beginning and the end of the world. All history is but a momentary flash in the Creative Intelligence of God.

### *The Views of the Renaissance*

And now we have passed through the cathedral of Christian metaphysics. We have concluded our examination of the world's mystery through the beautiful but opaque stained glass of medieval

thought. Let us issue once more into the open air and look at the philosophy of the Renaissance—the rebirth of ancient speculation into modern science.

The scientific discoveries of the modern world have exercised a profound influence on metaphysics from the time of the Renaissance to the present day. For we now have a new map of the universe from which to chart our journey into the unknown. The astronomy of Copernicus, which enthroned the sun instead of the earth as the hub of the universe, deflated man to a position of comparative unimportance in the pageantry of creation. The planetary revolution of K  pler introduced order into the chaotic complexity of the heavens. The telescope of Galileo brought heaven and earth into closer communion. And Newton's law of gravitation disclosed a fundamental harmony between the motion of the planets, the flowing of the tides, and the actions of men. The world had become bigger and at the same time more familiar. Man had lost his old pretensions, but he had gained a new wisdom. Having been displaced from the center of things where his vision had been limited, he now found himself upon the perimeter from which his imagination could encompass the entire sphere of knowledge.

The man who first among moderns attempted to bring all knowledge within the province of his intellect was Francis Bacon.

### *Bacon's Interpretation of Nature*

It was Francis Bacon's motto that the best life was the widest life—*bene vixit qui bene latuit*. To attain to the widest understanding of truth is the worthiest ambition of man. "The inquiry of truth, which is the wooing of it; the knowledge of truth, which is the praise of it; and the belief of truth, which is the enjoying of it, is the sovereign good of human natures."

Bacon's philosophy was the philosophy of common sense. He was concerned with the concrete truths of the earth rather than with the abstract truth of Heaven. Yet he faithfully subscribed to this abstract truth—the Great Mind above, which guides the little minds below. "I had rather believe all the fables in the Legend, and the Talmud and the Alcoran, than that this universal frame is without a Mind." Disbelief in God, he said, is due to defective under-

standing. "A little philosophy inclineth a man's mind to atheism; but depth in philosophy bringeth men's minds about to religion." For the study of philosophy discloses a divine pattern in the universe. "While the mind of man looketh upon scattered causes (in nature), it may sometimes rest in them and go no further; but when it beholdeth the chain of them, confederate and linked together, it must needs fly to Providence and Deity." Nothing in the world is accidental; everything is preordained—that is, the result of an originally planned order. "*Chance* is the name of a thing that does not exist."

Bacon was no innovator in philosophy; he was merely an iconoclast. He broke down the "false" concepts of the past to prepare the ground for the "true" concepts of the future. "Hitherto," he said, "men have used the wrong methods of research in their effort to discover reality." And so he wrote a book—the *Novum Organum*—in which he offered to the world the new method of rational induction through scientific experiment.

But the discussion of this book—"Bacon's supreme work"—belongs to our section on Logic. For the present, we shall go on to the speculations of the "father of modern philosophy"—René Descartes.

### *Descartes' Famous "I think, therefore I am"*

Bacon had cleared away the débris of the old philosophic systems. Descartes proceeded to construct the new.

This new philosophy is founded upon the principle of science. It starts with the scientific declaration that we must accept nothing as true until we have proved it to be so. We must approach the realm of metaphysics, just as we approach the realm of physics, with a questioning mind. We neither believe nor disbelieve. We are neutral, but with a desire to learn the truth. We want to be shown. We enter through the gateway of doubt into the mystery of the unknown.

And what do we find there? At first, nothing. All is dark. We are like travelers lost in a forest. But let us not hesitate. Let us go straight ahead—doubting, examining, verifying, seeking the solution to the mystery.

Above all, we must doubt. "Because I wished to give myself entirely to the search after Truth, I thought that it was necessary for me . . . to reject as absolutely false anything as to which I could imagine the least ground of uncertainty . . . And since all the same thoughts and imaginations which we have while awake may also come to us in sleep, without any of them being at the same time true, I resolved to assume that everything that ever entered into my mind was no more true than the illusions of my dreams."

Yet this very dreaming brings Descartes to his first reality. For dreaming requires a dreamer. "The fact of my thinking reveals to me something that thinks." What is this *something*? It is I. *Cogito, ergo sum. I think, therefore I am.* My very doubt proves my existence as a doubter. Otherwise doubt itself could not exist.

And so, having started from skepticism, Descartes arrives at one positive fact. *I am.*

But who am I? What am I? To this question Descartes gives a simple and logical answer. I am that thing which does the doubting. In other words, I am a *thinking* thing, or a *Mind*. I may well doubt the existence of my body; but I cannot doubt away my doubt—that is, the existence of my mind. "Hence I know that I am a substance whose entire nature it is to think and for whose existence there is no need of any place, nor does it depend on any material thing; so that this *me*—that is to say, the soul by which I am what I am—is entirely distinct from my body and is even more easy to know than is the latter; and even if the body were not, the soul would not cease to be what it is."

And thus, by the scientific process of questioning everything, Descartes succeeds (at least to his own satisfaction) in establishing one certainty. The existence of the soul.

Are there any other certainties—other things that my thinking soul can perceive clearly and distinctly as true? Yes, replies Descartes. There are two such other certainties. The substance of my body, and the existence of God.

"My body, as I can truly observe, is a substance." It is a *material* substance, just as my soul is a *thinking* substance. The thing called *me*, therefore, consists of two distinct parts: the passive machine, or the body; and the active mechanic, or the soul.



This philosophy of machine and mechanic is known as the *dualistic* system—that is, the system which divides the world into *two separate entities*, matter and mind. It therefore serves as a basis for the two divergent philosophical theories of modern times—*Materialism* and *Idealism*. The Materialists declare that the mind is part of the body and that consequently the mechanic is but one of the wheels in the machine. The Idealists, on the other hand, maintain that the body is part of the mind and that therefore the machine is merely a function or a conception of the mechanic.

But to return to Descartes and his effort to discover the oasis of faith through the desert of doubt. Thus far, as we have seen, he has tried to establish the reality of his mind and the substance of his body. He next endeavors to establish the existence of God. "Whatever I can conceive very clearly and distinctly is true." Bearing this in mind, and speculating on the fact that I am often assailed with doubt, I realize that my existence is not quite perfect. "For I see clearly that it is a greater perfection to know than to doubt." But whence have I learned to think of anything more perfect than myself? Obviously from some nature which really *is* more perfect than myself—a nature which combines all the perfections of which I can form any idea—in a word, God. Only that which is perfect can be attributed to God. In Him there can be no imperfection. Doubt, inconstancy, sadness, anger, hatred—these cannot be the attributes of God. For they are *imperfect* attributes—the badges of humanity and not of divinity. God is perfect, which means infinite, eternal, immutable, independent, omniscient, omnipotent, divine. This fact of the existence of God, submits Descartes, "equals and even surpasses in certitude the demonstrated facts of geometry." God is the perfection that leads our imperfect footsteps instinctively toward the light.

This, then, is Descartes' picture of human existence—a mechanical body; a living soul within; and the spirit of God above, guiding and sustaining us all.

### *The Pantheism of Spinoza*

And now we come to "the most lovable of the great philosophers." Ethically without a peer, Spinoza based his ethics upon a

metaphysic derived from Descartes but engraved with the signature of his own genius. Descartes had described reality as consisting of three entities: God, Mind, and Matter. Spinoza combined these three entities into a single living unit: God and Mind and Matter—or, to put it differently, God and Man and the World—are One. This pantheistic proposition means that the entire universe is but an attribute of God's divine nature. Each of us is a definite part of Him, a cell in His body, a thought in His mind, a syllable in His poem of life. Yet all of us, with our scanty five senses and our limited intelligence, can understand but a small segment of this truth. It is as if we were looking at the sea or the sky through a narrow chink in a prison wall. We suffer from insufficient vision in the prison cell of our body. A half-blind person can distinguish only a few drab colors. Our senses are color-blind to the manifold attributes of God. A worm, crawling on the ground, can have but an infinitesimal glimpse of the vast world of which he is a part. We are nothing but groveling worms when we try to understand God of whom we are a part. The greatest philosopher has but an infantile conception of the true nature—that is to say, the true character—of God.

Yet even this infantile conception, declares Spinoza, prompts us to conceive that God is in everything and that everything is in God. He is the Intelligence that guides the world and the world that is guided by that Intelligence. He is the eternal Artist who weaves, "on the roaring loom of time," the garment of planets and stars that make Him visible to our senses. The universe is the body of God, the thought that contemplates it is His mind, and the energy that moves it is His spirit. And thus God is at once the substance and the idea and the motion of the world. He *is* the world. Every blade of grass, every clod of earth, every unfolding flower, every living creature however lowly, partakes alike of His divine essence. The most magnificent constellation in the heavens and the meanest beggar on earth are related syllables in the poem of life.

Every human body, therefore, is part of God's substance; and every human mind is part of God's thought. Let us not, however, confuse our own puny intelligence with the infinite intelligence of God. The world is governed not in accordance with our individual desires but in accordance with God's comprehensive design. The

story which He has woven into the drama of life is beyond our understanding. It is not for us to pass judgment upon it, since it has not been written for our benefit. It is as logical to believe that the world was made for man to enjoy as it is to believe that noses were made for eye-glasses to rest upon. The story of the human race is but an episode in the universal history of God. The entire earth, as a cynical Spinozist has remarked, is but a pesky pebble caught between the toes of God.

But Spinoza would have disapproved of this anthropomorphic blasphemy. In speaking of God, he said, we must be careful not to ascribe to Him a human form or human emotions. God is not a capricious and long-bearded old patriarch who is moved by our prayers to help us or by the imprecations of our enemies to injure us. What seems good or bad to us as individuals is of no concern to Him. For though our mind is a part of God's Mind, it is only a *microscopic* part. All things, to be sure, partake of the intelligence of God. But in this world there are different grades of intelligence. The mind of a tree, for example, has very little in common with the mind of a dog; the mind of a dog has very little in common with the mind of the average human; and the mind of the average human has very little in common with the mind of a Socrates or a Shakespeare or a Descartes. But even the mind of Descartes as compared to God is like the mind of a tree as compared to Descartes.

Yet—and here comes the reassuring phase of Spinoza's philosophy—our destiny is greater than we think. Each of us, though but a *small* part of God, is an *equally important* part. Our present sojourn on earth, as the Spinozist Walt Whitman has hinted, is but a stage in our ultimate development. You, I, the peasant at the plow, the workman in the factory, the artist before his canvas, the poet at his desk, the vagabond in the gutter—all of us are related pupils in the selfsame school of eternity. We happen to be in different grades, depending upon our state of mental and spiritual development at this particular moment. But in the long run, whatever our present grade or station or degree of knowledge, we shall all alike reach the senior class of the elect.

This philosophy of Spinoza is the inspiration for the democratic idea in politics. For it advances the principle that intrinsically every

human creature is divine. Here we find the noblest affection ever entertained for man because, as Ernest Renan has observed, it springs from "the truest vision ever conceived of God."

*Leibniz's "Best of All Possible Worlds"*

Baron Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz was a dual personality. He was blessed with a courageous mind and cursed with a timid heart. Intellectually one of the outstanding pioneers of human thought, he was spiritually a cringing flunkey of the German court. As a result of this divided allegiance, he gave to the world two systems of philosophy: the one, a profound and logical concept of existence which he wrote for himself; the other, a shallow and shadowy picture of reality which he wrote for his queen.

We shall first consider the system of Leibniz the philosopher. In the development of his *genuine* philosophy he owed a great debt to Spinoza—a debt which he recorded in his secret papers and openly denied. Before the world, Herr Leibniz would acknowledge no Jew as his master. But "when nobody was looking," he discussed his papers with Spinoza, asked for his master's advice, and frequently followed his suggestions.

The philosophical system of Leibniz is based upon the metaphysics of Spinoza, which in turn is based upon the metaphysics of Descartes. But Leibniz departs from his two predecessors to embark upon a theory of his own. Descartes had represented reality as consisting of three substances—God, Mind, and Matter. Spinoza had combined the three into a single substance—God. Leibniz advanced the concept that the world contains an infinite number of substances which he called *Monads*, or *Souls*.

These souls, said Leibniz, exist independently of one another. Yet they are bound together by a principle that may be termed as *identical timing*. They are like a collection of clocks that have been set to keep the same perfect time. Simultaneously they tick off the seconds, and together they strike the hours—not because they influence one another, but because they are perfectly attuned instruments. And all of them move in unison with the pre-established harmony of God.

All these clocks or monads or souls, declares Leibniz, have been

pre-ordained from all time to act in a certain way. Nothing can swerve them from their course. In human life, as in non-living objects, there is no such thing as a possible choice between two courses of action. Free will does not exist in the universe. No clock can skip a single beat of its allotted time. No soul can escape a single step of its predestined journey through the universe. Every human act, "past, present, or future," wrote Leibniz in a letter to Antoine Arnault, "is comprised in the nature" of the actor. However we may strive, we can do no other than what we are *destined* to do. "This proposition," continued Leibniz in the same letter, "is of great importance, and deserves to be well established."

In this denial of the existence of free will, Leibniz is a faithful follower of Spinoza. "There is in the mind," wrote Spinoza, "no free will; but the mind is impelled to will this or that by forces which have been operating from eternity." In other words, all our actions, just like the features of our face and the muscles of our body, have been predetermined ever so long before our birth, before the very birth of the world. Thus from time immemorial it has been destined, in accordance with the immutable laws of nature, that a Shakespeare should be born to write divine dramas or that a Socrates should be sentenced to die for his fellow men. Our acts, said Spinoza—and, after him, Leibniz—are no more free and they have no more to do with the will than the falling of the rain from the clouds or the flight of an arrow that has been shot out of a bow. The only difference between the flight of an arrow and the act of a human being is that the human being is *conscious* of his act and therefore mistakes his *consciousness* for *will power*. If the arrow could be aware of its flight, it too would insist, like a human being, that it rushes forward to its goal through the initiative of its own free will.

Thus wrote Leibniz, the philosopher, in his personal correspondence. But his correspondent, Arnault, was horrified. "Such talk is ungodly. It denies the Christian doctrine of personal responsibility for sin." He advised Leibniz to keep these thoughts to himself. Leibniz accepted Arnault's advice; and it was not until 1901—almost two hundred years after his death—that his "Spinozistic" philosophy was published for the first time.

But in his own day Leibniz the philosopher was eclipsed by

Leibniz the courtier. Following his belief in determinism as against free will, he had declared in his private letters that creation itself was determined in accordance with eternal and immutable laws. "These laws have *necessitated* the nature of the world we live in." In other words, this is the *only* possible world. But in his public lectures he declared, "This is the *best* possible world." Creation, according to this view, is not the result of necessary laws but the handiwork of the goodness of God.

So far, so good. To this proposition not even Spinoza might have objected. There is no reason why an *eternal* law cannot be a *beneficent* law. Necessity may be a friendly as well as an unfriendly master. What is *destined* for us may well be—most likely is—*best* for us. But Leibniz does not stop here. He goes on from this point to develop two ideas that have had a dampening effect on philosophic progress. These two ideas are (1) the *hierarchy of monads* and (2) the *indorsement of evil*.

The monads or souls of Leibniz, you will recall, are not interdependent but parallel. They do not react upon, or coöperate with, one another. Each of them is an isolated individual, living its own life and utterly regardless of every other life. Like a collection of clocks standing side by side, they merely tick off the same time, keeping as it were an eternal goose-step in perfect unison with the self-appointed Fuehrer of the Universe. A thoroughly German conception.

Moreover, these monads, though perfectly *attuned*, are not equally perfect *in tune*. To change this to a Platonic figure of speech, we may compare the monads of Leibniz to a number of mirrors that simultaneously reflect the universe. But there is a hierarchy in this battalion of mirrors. Some of them reflect the universe *more clearly*; others, *less clearly*. It all depends upon the *rank* of the monad in question. Here we find the democracy of Spinoza translated into the aristocracy of Leibniz. Spinoza had insisted that all men reflect the *same light*. But Leibniz declared that no two of them reflect it to the *same degree*. In his own life, Leibniz was always a stickler for class distinction. Every man, he said, must know his place; and every *woman's* place is below the level of her man. Whenever a girl of his acquaintance married, he gave her

what he called a "wedding present" of useful advice: "Don't give up your washing now that you've got your man."

And all this gradation and degradation of the human soul, declared Leibniz, is as it should be. For this is the best of all possible worlds. The evil that exists in it, he said, serves merely to accentuate the good. A world without pain would be a world without pleasure. The joy of convalescence is born out of the suffering of sickness. Life is so sweet because it is so fleeting. A world without evil would be no good at all.

Furthermore, what is evil for some is good for others. Without defeat for your enemy there can be no victory for yourself. Hence "the evil that is so prevalent in the world is but a sign of the goodness of God." This philosophical concept serves as a foundation for the tyrannical form of government. For it declares, in effect, that it is good for the subjects to suffer that the king may have his joy.

### *The Idealism of Berkeley*

Bishop George Berkeley, the metaphysical Irishman, owed half a debt to Descartes. For he borrowed only half of Descartes' system. The "father of modern philosophy," as we have seen, had proclaimed the dualistic union of mind and matter as the substance of the universe. Berkeley accepted mind and rejected matter. "No object," he declared, "exists outside of the mind perceiving it . . . The table I write on, I say exists, because I see it and feel it . . . As to what is said about the existence of things without any relation to their being perceived, that to me is perfectly unintelligible. Their very existence depends upon their being perceived." Berkeley would have thoroughly agreed with the American farmer who, when he saw a rhinoceros in the circus, exclaimed—"It's a lie. There ain't no such critter." What the farmer saw, Berkeley would have said, was a bundle of perceptions tied together in the mind and classified as a rhinoceros. "The whole world is merely a matter of mental sensations."

But in that case, you might object, a tree or a lake or a mountain would cease to exist if no one were looking at it. To this objection Berkeley would reply that God is always looking at everything.

Hence the so-called "material" universe exists as an eternal perception in God's mind.

Berkeley advances an ingenious argument in support of his thesis that material objects have no reality outside of the mind. Take, for example, a vessel of lukewarm water when one of your hands is hot and the other is cold. Put both your hands into the vessel. The water now is no longer lukewarm, but cold to the one hand and hot to the other. But the water cannot be both hot and cold at the same time. The fact is, said Berkeley, that the cold water and the hot water and the lukewarm water are mental observations—nothing more. All the things that we touch or taste or smell or hear or see, whether in our dreams or in our waking moments, are merely ideas in our minds. And we who perceive these ideas, even at such moments when we ourselves cannot be perceived—as, for example, when we are absent from our friends or even in the dark of the night when all of us are sound asleep—must attribute our existence to the fact that we are ever-present and sleepless ideas in the Mind of God.

### *The Nihilism of Hume*

David Hume adopted the philosophy of Berkeley and carried it into a dead-end street. Since everything we perceive is merely an idea in the mind, the mind itself is but another such idea. It has no real existence. Moreover, the Mind of God is only an idea in the mind of man. Therefore God, too, has no real existence. Berkeley had destroyed the body of the world. And now Hume annihilated the soul. "There is nothing left"—not even a cosmic corpse with which to apprehend the philosophical crime.

We exist only when we are perceived. When we are not perceived, we cease to exist. But this seems absurd, you will say. The train, when it pulls out of sight of the passenger who has just left it, is still a thing of coaches and wheels. Furthermore, to a passenger who sits in one of the coaches and cannot see the wheels, the train still has wheels. To this objection Hume would retort: "How do you know?"

And, logically, Hume would seem to be in the right. Thus far no satisfactory refutation has been found to Hume's denial of ex-



istence. Yet it is the business—and the hope—of philosophy to try to find this refutation. For even though Hume's theory is logically unassailable, Hume himself disclaims it by disclaiming the existence of logic. "There can be no reason for, and no knowledge of, anything." The only reality in the world is an unreal succession of random and meaningless observations.

What, then, is the mind that makes these observations? Nothing, replied Hume, but a bundle of disconnected moods and emotions which we illogically represent as grouping themselves into a connected personality. The human individual, the entire human race, is the deceptive phantom of an unsubstantial dream.

A chill and cheerless philosophy, even to Hume himself. "I dine, I play a game of backgammon, I converse and am merry with my friends; and when after three or four hours of amusement I would return to my speculations they appear so cold and strained and ridiculous that I cannot find it in my heart to enter into them any further."

For at heart this "atheistic nihilist" was a profound believer. Maybe his theory that this is a world of illusions was the greatest illusion of them all. "I ask what is the cause of my belief. I care not; I know not; that doesn't concern me. But I do know that there is a God."

### *Kant's Doctrine of Reality*

As a young man, Immanuel Kant subscribed without question to the religion and the science of his day. But at fifty he read a German translation of the works of David Hume and experienced so great a shock as a result that he roused himself from his "dogmatic slumber" to a thorough investigation of the universe. From now on, he said, "I have the fortune to be a lover of metaphysics."

There were few men in history who met with a warmer reception from this elusive mistress. It was not until he was fifty-seven that he gave his masterpiece to the world. It was a landmark in the advancement of human thought. "I venture to assert," he wrote confidently in the preface, "that there is in this book not a single philosophical problem which has not been solved, or for the solution of which the key at least has not been supplied."

We shall attempt merely a sip of the strong metaphysical wine

which the author evaluated so highly and which many a modern devotee has accepted at the author's own valuation.

In the first place, Kant exposes the Berkeley-Hume theory that we derive all our knowledge through the medium of our senses. For our senses, he declares, are but imperfect measures of reality. They can conceive neither a finite world nor an infinite world. They can envision neither a beginning and an end of time on the one hand, nor a beginningless and an endless time on the other. The real world, accordingly, is beyond our *sensory* comprehension. But it is not beyond our *intellectual* comprehension. We can "see" the world with our "inner" eye. We can understand it without the help of experience. "My question is," writes Kant, "what can we hope to achieve with the intellect when all the substance and assistance of experience are taken away?" And he answers this question with the assertion that we can hope to employ our intellect—that is to say, our reason—not only as a receiver of impressions but as a creator of ideas. We can, and we do, subordinate our *senses* to the service of our *sense*. "The eye without the mind is impotent and blind."

We must therefore try to understand the world "not through our *perceptions* but through our *conceptions*"—not through our impressions but through our intellect. For our intellect is not only a scientist that observes, but a philosopher that classifies. Science *and* philosophy are necessary if we wish to acquaint ourselves with the truth.

And where does this truth lead us? To the conviction that the world as it is, or the *thing-in-itself*, is quite different from the world as it appears, or the *phenomenon*. "Kant's greatest contribution to philosophy," observed Schopenhauer, "was the distinction he made between the real world and the apparent world."

Our notions about men and nature, life and death, said Kant, are merely the perceptions of our senses but not the conceptions of our mind. "It remains completely unknown to us what (these) objects may be by themselves and apart from the receptivity of our senses." The same is true of our notions about free will, the soul, and God. Because of the limitation of our senses we cannot prove their existence. We therefore have no right to be positive about anything. We must dispose of all dogma.

Thus far, Kant subscribes faithfully to the agnosticism of Hume. But from this point forward, he strikes out on a metaphysical trail of his own. Hume, *in spite of his reason*, had expressed a belief in God. Kant now proceeded to verify this belief *through the intermedium of reason*.

The gentle philosopher was moved to this act of verification, as Heine half jestingly and half seriously points out, through his pity for poor old Lampe, his servant who trudged faithfully behind him on his daily stroll, with an umbrella in his hand as a protection for his master in the event of an unexpected rainstorm. "Hitherto," writes Heine, "Immanuel Kant has appeared as the grim, inexorable iconoclast. He has stormed heaven, put the whole garrison to the sword; the ruler of the world swims senseless in his blood; there is no more any mercy or fatherly goodness or future reward for present privations; the immortality of the soul is in last agonies—death rattles and groans! And old Lampe stands by with his umbrella under his arm as a sorrowing spectator, and the sweat of anguish and tears run down his cheeks. Then Immanuel Kant is moved to pity and shows himself not only a great philosopher but a good man. 'Old Lampe,' he observes, 'must have a God, or else the poor man cannot be happy; and people really ought to be happy in this world. Practical common sense *requires* it. Very well, then, let practical reason *guarantee* it.'

And so, because of his love for the common man, Kant brought his reason into play in order to guarantee the existence of God. If we cannot base religion upon scientific principles, he said, we can base it upon moral law. *Accept* a belief in God because you *need* such a belief. Your practical requirements are more important than your theoretical speculations. After all, if there is one absolute reality in this world it is the reality of our moral obligation. This moral obligation—Kant calls it the *categorical imperative*—guides our conscience to a definite distinction between right and wrong. And our conscience is a matter not of science but of intuition—a matter not of *abstract* but of *practical* reason.

Our practical reason reveals to us, in the first place, the existence of God as the guide of our conscience, the prompter of our duty, the director of our individual and our social organization. In the second place, our practical reason proves to us the existence of free

will. For if we had no free will we could have no conception of any moral obligation. We cannot feel *obliged* to do what we are *unable* to do. In the third place, our practical reason demonstrates to us the certainty of a life after death. For we follow the dictates of our conscience even when we realize that we shall receive no reward for such good conduct in this world. We act upon the instinctive principle that goodness is its own excuse for being. Why? Because we intuitively know that the drama of our present life is but an uncompleted act in a larger drama and that the plot, however incongruous it may appear in *this* world, will come to a rational and satisfactory denouement in the *next* world. "I assure you, dear Lampe, you will not always remain the servant of another man."

Tennyson has well expressed this idea in his philosophical poem, *In Memoriam*. Relying, like Kant, upon his practical rather than upon his abstract reason, he assures us

That nothing walks with aimless feet;  
That not one life shall be destroyed,  
Or cast as rubbish to the void,  
When God hath made the pile complete.

God, the Free Will, and the Immortal Soul—these are the facts of the real world of the mind as opposed to the imaginary world of the senses.

Yet there is one superior sense, observes Kant, which points as definitely as the mind to the existence of God. This is our sense of beauty. We find God in the beautiful design of Nature—a design based upon "the pattern laid up in the heavens." Behind beauty there is always purpose. The work of art presupposes the artist. When we experience the beautiful we feel within ourselves an infinite power which corresponds to an infinite power outside of ourselves. Like calls unto like. God has spoken to Man, and Man replies, "I understand." The genius—the painter, the sculptor, the musician, the poet, the seer—lives for the greater part of his life in the presence of this vision. But all the rest of us have our moments of sublime insight. And at such moments we recognize the presence of God in the two great mysteries of the world—"the starry heavens above, and the moral law within."

*Hegel's Search for the Truth*

Kant, though a German, was the spokesman for the world. But Hegel was the mouthpiece of Prussian aggressiveness. "The height of audacity in serving up pure nonsense"—I am quoting Schopenhauer—"in stringing together senseless and extravagant mazes of words, such as had previously been known only in madhouses, was finally reached in Hegel." His metaphysical system—to continue Schopenhauer's castigation—"became the instrument of the most bare-faced general mystification that has ever taken place, with a result which will appear fabulous to posterity, and will remain as a monument to German stupidity."

Prophetic words. Hegel's philosophy was not only one of the most obscure but one of the most vicious distortions of truth in the history of mankind. For it served as the spawn out of which crawled that abomination of the twentieth century—the Nazi State.

The ultimate reality, declared Hegel, is pure thought thinking about pure thought. That is, perfection completely wrapped up in self-admiration. A life-sized preview of Hitler contemplating Hitler to the exclusion of the rest of the world.

But let us examine Hegel's metaphysics a little more closely.

*Reality*, declares Hegel, is *rationality*. Whatever is, is reasonable. Moreover, whatever is, is right. Hegel calls this right and reasonable totality of existence *The Absolute*. This absolute exists through the principle of contradiction. It is the resultant of two opposing forces—the harmony that is welded out of internal strife. For everything in the world, maintains Hegel, comprises within it both itself and its opposite. Everything, so to speak, has a chip on the shoulder against itself. It is impossible to conceive of anything, Hegel asserts, without at the same time conceiving of its contradiction. You cannot think of finiteness without thinking of infinity, or of life without thinking of death. A man is a man and not a woman. A thing is itself only because it is not something else. Every thesis in an argument has its antithesis. Every pole has its counterpole. Heat has its cold; love, its hate; day, its night; youth, its age.

So far, Hegel's contention is pretty obvious. But from this point he goes on to a startling pronouncement. Everything not only *has*

an opposite, but *is* its opposite! The truth lies on both sides of every question. Existence is a struggle of opposing forces in an effort to combine into a higher unity. *Thesis* on the one side; *Antithesis* on the other; *Synthesis* resulting from the conflict of the two. The blessed isle of the Absolute is reached through an ocean of blood.

And to what end? To the end that the Synthesis, or the absorption into the Absolute, may bring us freedom. A good and legitimate aim, it would seem. But at this juncture Hegel issues a still more amazing pronouncement. He identifies the Absolute with the State—not the Universal but the Prussian State—and he confounds freedom with submission to the absolute power of that State. “The German world knows that all are free”—not to follow their own conscience but to bow to their king’s command. For disobedience means strife; and obedience, peace—the synthetic fusion of the thesis of the lion and the antithesis of the lamb. In the Hegelian philosophy, however, the lamb ultimately lies not *beside* but *inside* the lion.

### *Schopenhauer's Will to Live*

In the development of his philosophy, Schopenhauer acknowledged three masters: Kant, Plato, and Buddha. But he took the equanimity of Kant, the idealism of Plato and the compassion of Buddha, and wrapped them up in a vapor of pessimistic dejection arising out of a disordered stomach. To show his contempt for social intercourse, he spent the greater part of his time in the company of a poodle named *Atma* (the *World-Soul*). He might well have included among his masters the old Greek “dog-philosopher,” Diogenes.

For, in common with Diogenes, he believed that human life is a thing of no value: Man is essentially a creature of pain. He is the slave of a universal *will to exist*. (This *will to exist* is Schopenhauer’s interpretation of Kant’s world of reality, the *thing-in-itself*.) Overmastered by this inexorable will, we are forever impelled to desire one object after another. But the moment we obtain our desire, what follows? A terrible boredom, an empty void. Existence thus becomes a meaningless series of pursuits and disillusionments—a pendulum swinging continuously between the pain of desire and the emptiness of fulfilment. For all satisfaction in life is of a negative

quality. When we attain our desire, we have merely freed ourselves from one hunger to become the immediate slaves of other hungers. Paradoxically enough, it is only the *absence* of bliss that can make us understand bliss. We love best the things we haven't got. Happiness is but a dream. The only reality is pain.

This, then, is the sort of world we live in. The Platonic world of Ideas becomes, in the philosophy of Schopenhauer, the world of One Idea—an eternal Will to exist in a world of pain. In such an existence, asks Schopenhauer, is there any place for hope? Decidedly no, he replies. Nothing but satiety and tedium marking off the stages in the ceaseless propulsion of the will. The very presence of the will within us implies a deficiency, a want, a lustful craving for something that can never be stilled.

Is there, then, no end to this? Cannot even death put a stop to the mad process? Must we remain forever enslaved under this cosmic will to exist? Is there not somewhere a Buddhistic Nirvana, a Paradise of forgetfulness where the human race may finally be released from the nightmare of existence? Unfortunately, no. The craving for life is eternal. Even if the individual commits suicide, he has not put an end to this universal urge. For though the part dies, the whole moves persistently onward. The collective will to exist—asserts Schopenhauer—overcomes its eternal enemy, death, through the reproductive organs of the species. Nature doesn't care at all about the individual; she is concerned only with the type. As soon as the individual reproduces his kind, he has lost his value for Nature. Having fulfilled his duty, man is ready for the grave. Nature has deceived the individual into perpetuating the misery of his race. "She has endowed woman with a wealth of charm—for a few years at the expense of the rest of her life—so that during those years of her bloom she may capture the fancy of some man to such a degree that he is hurried away into undertaking the honorable care of her . . . Then, just as the female ant, after fecundation, loses her wings, which are now superfluous . . . so, after giving birth to one or two children, a woman loses her beauty. Her mission has been accomplished." Time to make way for younger, healthier bodies to carry on the work of reproduction. "What an irony, this perpetuation of the race. And how foolish we are to *love!*"

There is no reality in love—whether individual as between man and woman, or universal as between man and mankind. There is only the Universal Will. Call it God if you like, but it will pay no heed to your call. We just go on fruitlessly extending our lives, “like a soap-bubble which we blow out as long and as large as possible, although we know perfectly well that it will burst.”

Vanity of vanities, cries this Koheleth of the nineteenth century. All is vanity and a puffing of the wind of eternal fate.

### *Herbert Spencer's Materialism*

And now we come to the nineteenth-century transition from the idealistic to the materialistic phase of the philosophical dualism as fathered by Descartes. The Germans, as we have seen, had adopted the concept of the world as an Idea—though (as in the case of Hegel) not necessarily a *benevolent* or (as in the case of Schopenhauer) a *happy* Idea. It remained for two Englishmen to build the bridge that carried metaphysics from the world of fixed ideas to that of evolved matter. The picture of existence as a perpetual process of evolution is based upon the scientific investigation of Darwin and the philosophic speculation of Spencer.

Herbert Spencer was more interested in facts than in fancies. He read little but observed much. Once, as a young man, he dipped into Kant; but he threw the book away when he noted that Kant considered space and time to be sense perceptions rather than actual realities. “The man is a dunce!” he exclaimed.

He looked always upon the prosaic side of life—indeed, he insisted it was the *only* side. Engaged for a time to the novelist, George Eliot, he climaxed their romantic experience with the following observation: “Usually heads have, here and there, either flat places or slight hollows; but her head was everywhere convex.” He possessed, he said, but a single emotion—a pride in his unemotionalism. It was in this cold and calculating state of mind that he undertook one of the most thoroughgoing surveys of the universe ever made by man. It took him almost half a century to complete the work—a masterpiece of radiant brilliance but little warmth. Spencer’s philosophy is like the reflection of the sunlight on a polar sea.



For the truth as he unveils it is bleak and dismal and dead. Man is a spiritless body; and the world, a lifeless machine. With Thomas Huxley he maintains that sooner or later every operation in the universe (as well as in the human mind) will be explained on mechanical principles. In his early years, Spencer tells us, he was interested in "the construction of watches." This interest remained with him throughout his life. He saw all existence revolving on the wheels of a cosmic timepiece. He described this revolution—or rather *evolution*—down to the minutest detail, save for one important item. He failed to explain how the whole thing got wound up in the first place.

But Spencer offered a logical reason for his failure to explain the origin of the world. "The unknowable," he said, "is inconceivable." Both the believer and the disbeliever in God are equally unable to substantiate their claim. For if God made the world, who made God? But if nobody made the world, how did it happen to come into existence?

We must therefore accept our mental limitations and refrain from extending our ideas beyond the boundaries of the knowable. We have no right, observes Spencer, to call ourselves either theists or atheists. We are merely agnostics—we don't know. "Ultimate scientific ideas are all representations of realities that cannot be comprehended . . . In all directions the scientist's investigations bring him face to face with an insoluble enigma; and he ever more clearly perceives it to be an insoluble enigma. He learns at once the greatness and the littleness of the human intellect—its power in dealing with all that comes within the range of experience, its impotence in dealing with all that transcends experience."

And so Spencer dismissed the transcendental and devoted himself to the actual. He based his philosophy upon the definite evidence of science rather than upon the indefinite suppositions of religion. With regard to these suppositions about the great mystery, the Final Cause of existence, "the scientist more than any other truly *knows* that he knows nothing."

But within the field of the knowable, the scientist can range at will. And Spencer follows him to the uttermost limits of that field—verifying, classifying, arranging, organizing the entire panorama of human experience into a comprehensive system of philosophy.

"Philosophy," to use Spencer's own definition, "is completely-unified knowledge."

And this unification, observes Spencer, is founded upon a universal principle—the rhythm of motion in a world of matter. All existence is rhythmical. The ebb and the flow of the tides, the succession of the seasons, the birth and the decline of races and men, the vibration of the violin string and the beating of the heart, the circulation of the blood, of the wind, of the planets and the stars—these are but a few examples of the interminable pulse of the universe. And this eternal pulsation marks off the periodicity of existence in accordance with the formula of *evolution* and *dissolution*. When we examine "the entire history of anything," observes Spencer, "we find that it includes its appearance out of the imperceptible and its disappearance into the imperceptible." Out of the nebulae spring masses of flame; they develop into comets and meteors and stars and planets; and then the individual bodies become organized into groups and constellations and galaxies and universes until they merge into a supreme harmony of motion and light. And by the same principle, declares Spencer, out of the earth arise living creatures; they develop into fishes and birds and animals and men; the individuals then become assorted into families and clans and classes and states until finally they will harmonize into the united federation of a coöperative world.

So much for the evolution of the rhythmic principle in a material universe. But after the *evolution* comes the *dissolution*. From the individuals to the aggregate, from the aggregate back to the individuals. From death to life, from life to death. Dust thou art, to dust returnest. This is true of man; it is equally true of the world.

This process of evolution and dissolution, however, comprises but a single up-and-down pulsation in the everlasting heart-throb of existence. After the completion of one cycle, another cycle will begin. And this process will go on and on, and forever on. Every organism will end in disorganization. Every star will dissolve into mist. Every man, every nation, every syllable of the recorded achievements and aspirations of mankind will be blotted out. Every birth is but a summons to the grave.

This is the gloomy note upon which Spencer concludes the meta-

physical section of his philosophy. Yet there was no logical reason why Spencer should have thus rung down the curtain on his drama of existence. If the cycle goes on forever, the life and death of an individual person or planet or universe is but a single act and not the entire play. Spencer had no right to conclude that death any more than life is the final note. In the rhythm of existence, the day follows the night just as surely as the night follows the day. Spencer began as an agnostic but he ended as a dogmatist.

Yet this dogmatic materialism failed to satisfy even so scientific a mind as Spencer's. In the very midst of his denial, he found himself impelled to believe in a "reality that lies beyond experience." Life in its essence, he confessed in a late edition of his work, "cannot be conceived in physico-chemical terms." Back of it all there must be an Inscrutable Power—"an Unknown Cause that produces within us a certain faith" not only in the continual *evolution* but in the ultimate *justification* of existence. If death is the epilogue to the *old* chapter in the story of life, it is also the prologue to the *new*.

### *Nietzsche's "Transvaluation of Values"*

It may be said of Nietzsche, as Byron said of Rousseau, that "he knew how to make madness beautiful." Nietzsche was a mad prophet—the founder of a religion without a God. "I am," he exulted, "the most pious of all those who believe not in God." He took the cold determinism of Spencer and set it on fire. The result is a splendor that excites and distresses and obscures—like the sun when you focus your vision too directly upon it. Also, like the sun, Nietzsche's philosophy taken in too large doses can produce a terrific sickness. It inflamed too many of his disciples into a fever for war.

Strictly speaking, Nietzsche was not a philosopher but a poet—perhaps the most imaginative prose-poet of the nineteenth century. He advanced no definite doctrine; his thoughts were too paradoxical to be logical. Yet out of the maze of his contradictions it is possible to find a path to the centermost idea of his philosophy.

This idea is a fanatical acceptance of the evolutionary cycle in a material world whose existence is based upon a will not only to live, but to power, to *overpower*. Time is a passing shadow on the

screen of eternity. The centuries come and go, the cycle of history—Nietzsche here follows the Spencerian philosophy—runs its course from beginning to end, and then the process is repeated in the Eternal Recurrence of existence. All the cycles are identical to the last detail. Everything will be again, and ever again, as it is today. Billions of years from now, billions of years from then, there will be once more a world like this with a reader like you, sitting in precisely the same place, reading precisely the same book, thinking precisely the same thoughts. And this will happen on an infinite number of occasions in an infinite number of cycles. This endless repetition of existence may be roughly compared to a ferris wheel turning forever on its axis and whirling the identical passengers into the identical places with the identical opportunities for observation in a monotonous eternity of revolutions. This is inevitable, believed Nietzsche, because of the mathematical law of averages. We have a finite number of possible atomic combinations and an eternity in which these combinations can be made. When all the possible combinations of the atoms are exhausted, the shuffling of the cosmic cards is bound to result in *repeated repetitions* of the past.

And these repetitious cycles of existence—here Nietzsche adopts and distorts the philosophy of Schopenhauer—are activated by a will to get ahead. "The Will saith: 'So did I will it, so shall I will it! *Be not considerate of thy neighbor.*'" Ruthlessness, declares Nietzsche, is the principle of life. The animal fights to become man; man strives to become superman. The aim of every creature is to clamber to the top over the bodies of its fellow creatures. The torture of the many—this thought is borrowed from Leibniz—is necessary for the triumph of the few. And this triumph can be attained only through aggressive warfare—the warfare of the superior animal against the common herd; of the superior man, the superman, against the "bungled and botched" masses of the common people. The noblest occupation in the world is to wage war. "Man shall be trained for war and woman for the recreation of the warrior. All else is folly." This, contends Nietzsche, is not a criticism of religion. It is not a diatribe against ethics. It is merely a blunt statement of reality—the everlasting struggle for existence, the undying instinct for power. "What is the loftiest soul? The most self-

ish soul . . . They shall rise the highest who can trample upon others the best."

And so it is the destiny of the superman, believes Nietzsche, to train himself as the most successful of the world's killers. "A victorious war halloweth any cause." The progress of the world, according to Nietzsche, is a bloodstained march from the four-legged tawny lion to the two-legged blond beast.

It was no wonder that there were moments in which Nietzsche despised himself for his philosophy. "What is this that thou utterest? Say thy words and break in pieces."

Nietzsche spoke prophetically. His mind broke finally down. He ended his days in an insane asylum.

### *James's Philosophy of the Practical Life*

One of the most interesting sidelights in the study of philosophy is the discovery that no two human minds can see alike. Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Spinoza, Schopenhauer, Spencer, Kant—all these men look upon the selfsame world with the selfsame mental instruments, and yet they give us seven different kinds of worlds. Nietzsche examines the practical life of man, and he sees in it nothing but a battle for jungle supremacy. James observes it from the same practical angle and beholds in it a concerted effort toward ultimate coöperation.

James constructs his view of the universe upon an idea that Nietzsche might have used as the basis for his own philosophy. "Our obligation to seek truth," he observes, "is part of our general obligation to do what pays." That alone is true which is expedient in practice. Thus far, the words are reminiscent of Nietzsche. Yet note the entirely different connotation that they assume in James's pragmatic philosophy. In this world of ours, he maintains, there is no such thing as *the* truth. What we call a truth is merely a working hypothesis, a temporary tool that enables our minds to transform a bit of chaotic anarchy into a bit of cosmic order. What was true yesterday—that is, what was *helpful* yesterday—may not be true today. Old truths, like old weapons, tend to grow rusty and to become useless.

It is therefore impractical to try to reduce the universe to an

"absolutely single fact." Existence, like truth, is relative. Everything depends upon our individual point of view; *and no one has the right to assume that his is the only point of view which is infallible.* "Neither the whole of truth nor the whole of goodness is revealed to any single observer, although each observer gains a partial superiority of insight from the peculiar position in which he stands." And this superiority of insight which every individual has gained for himself is his own contribution to the eternal quest for the comprehension of God and the co-partnership of man. In his daily life, however, each man's faith, each man's church, each man's God is for him true if it enables him to cope with his legitimate daily problems.

That alone, therefore, is humanly true which is expedient in human practice. An idea is good only if it has a *cash value*. Let us not, however, confuse the *cash value* pragmatism of William James with the belligerent egotism of Nietzsche or the competitive materialism of our modern business life. The coinage of James's philosophical capital was neither physical nor fiscal, but moral. James looked down upon the mad inhuman scramble for empire and wealth. He scolded his more aggressive contemporaries for their worship of "that bitch goddess, success." His pragmatism was an ethical and therefore practical recognition of the tenacious human instinct to establish a democratic fellowship of the world. The meaning of life lies not in an isolated struggle as between man and man but in a united struggle of mankind against the forces of disruption and hate.

And thus Nietzsche and James stand at the opposite poles of the metaphysical quest. Nietzsche maintains that all men are created merely to serve as a stairway for the relentless ascent of the superman; James believes that the superman of the aggressive type is an abnormality—an ulcer which the healthy human organism is learning gradually to cauterize and cast off. And experience seems to show that William James is right. The five leading fighters in history, the so-called "supermen" of the Nietzschean conception, died like gangsters and not like gods. Alexander succumbed to a drunken debauch; Hannibal was driven to suicide; Caesar was assassinated; Napoleon met his end in captivity; and Hitler was caught in an underground trap. These men added not an iota to

the happiness of the world, and won not an iota of happiness for themselves. "The corridor of life," to paraphrase Papini, the Italian interpreter of William James, "belongs not to the few but to all mankind." And the light that guides us through this corridor is not universal strife but universal love.

### *Santayana's Life of Reason*

Santayana's philosophy may be defined as a credo of religious skepticism, or mystical doubt. Brought up as a devout Catholic, he broke away from the Church because of its inability to show him the whereabouts of God. He searched creation with the telescope and could discover no creator; he examined the brain with the microscope and could find no soul. He therefore concluded that the world is a machine and that the business of philosophy is to observe the operation of its laws. To observe it through the medium of science. "Science," he said, "contains all trustworthy knowledge."

And Santayana's scientific knowledge leads him back into the arms of Democritus. "Like Democritus, that greatest of ancient philosophers, I am a decided materialist . . . I do not know what matter is . . . But whatever it may be, I call it matter boldly, as I call my acquaintances Smith and Jones without knowing their secrets."

Especially, he might have added, the secret of their existence. For Santayana, basing his theory "upon reason," quite unreasonably assumes that living energy is no different from lifeless matter. That which we call life, or consciousness, is to Santayana not a *thing*, but a *condition*, a *pulsation*—"a fine quick organization within the material animal." That which we call mind, or soul, is merely the energy of the world that rises in every individual, as the sea rises in every wave. "It passes through us; and cry out as we may, it will move on . . . I believe there is nothing immortal."

And yet—here speaks the Catholic poet behind the mask of the atheist philosopher—"Life is akin to the eternal and ideal." And "he who lives in the ideal . . . enjoys a double immortality. The eternal has absorbed him while he lived, and when he is dead his influence brings others to the same absorption."

And thus we have a paradoxical system of metaphysics from this

unbelieving believer. Life is not immortal, but it is eternal. And God is a fiction, but our belief in God is a most cherished fact. Like Hume and Spencer and Kant, Santayana banishes religion from his mind and enshrines it in his heart. Santayana is able to break away from his Church. But he is unable to break away from his Faith.

For, like every other philosopher who is also a poet, he finds that the wings of his imagination carry him beyond the limits of his reason. And in the realm of mystery that transcends the region of light he is confronted with two unanswerable questions: What is this energy called life? And whence comes this machine called the world? Life and the world alike are entities not of construction but of growth. No machine as yet has grown like a flower out of a seed.

### *Bergson's Creative Evolution*

Henri Bergson, one of the world's profoundest metaphysicians, attempted the answer to the questions that perplexed Santayana into a confession of inconsistency. Existence, said Bergson, is a process of creative evolution—*perpetual growth*. Life is not a mechanical thing. For a mechanism, once it is constructed, never advances of itself as a result of some inner power. But life keeps on changing from within—advancing toward something better, something more complete. "To change is to mature, to mature is to go on creating oneself endlessly." Even in the ending of the old process of life, as in the transformation of the caterpillar into the chrysalis, there is the beginning of a new process of life, the transformation of the chrysalis into the butterfly. The entire universe is a conflict between life and matter; life climbs ever upward, and matter falls ever downward. Life is forever seeking new channels of activity, of expression, of *creation*, through the stubborn resistance of matter.

This creative impulse, this eternal instinct of the life-force to break through the walls of matter, is coextensive with reality. It is reality. It is the infinite stream of existence. The separate lives of men, their individual souls, "are nothing else than the little rills into which the great river of life divides itself, flowing through the (collective) body of humanity."

The individual life, the collective life, the universe, always exists. There is no such thing as non-existence. Indeed, it is humanly im-



possible to *think* of anything that doesn't exist. "For the moment you think of it, it is there, it exists." Everything lives, and lives—that is, it continues to develop—forever. "The everlasting development of life . . . is an effort of the creative power to arrive, through the channels of matter, at something which is realized only in man and which, even in man, is realized only imperfectly." Man, in other words, is an intermediary stage between the beast and the angel in the eternal movement of the spirit to break through the shackles of matter and to recreate itself into something higher and better. The spirit, or the mind, is the living impulse—*l'élan vital*—which keeps creation forever on the go. Matter is the substance which presents the series of obstacles that the spirit must overleap in its steeplechase toward the ultimate goal. And time is the marksman who checks up the progressive stages of the everlasting race.

The purpose of matter is to exercise the mind—like a problem set before a child to sharpen his wits. It takes opposition to develop strength, resistance to promote growth, fire and water to temper steel.

The keynote of existence, then, is its progressive vitality, its mastery over matter, its irresistible impulse to spiritual growth. Life is the eternal struggle of the mind to break through its material bonds. And the mind, declared Bergson, is not to be confounded with the brain. For the brain is matter; the mind, spirit. The fundamental quality of the mind is unrelated to the brain. This fundamental difference between the brain and the mind—and here we come to the core of Bergson's philosophy—consists in the fact that the brain is *intellectual* but the mind is *intuitive*. The intellect of the brain observes the separate objects of the world; but the intuition of the mind realizes that all these objects are the intimate parts of an undivided whole. The brain sees the disconnected leaves of the tree, the disconnected trees of the forest, the disconnected forests of the world. But the mind sees the unity that exists between the leaves and the tree, between the trees and the forest, between the forests and the earth. And between the earth and the universe. The selfsame creative power, the selfsame *urge from within*, shapes and sustains and gives growth to them all.

And it is only the spiritual instinct, which is the ordinary man's intuition and the poet's inspiration, that can understand the crea-

tive power of the universe. This spiritual instinct can grasp the whole of reality at any moment, from any point, under any circumstance. It lives not in time, but in eternity. That is to say, it lives not in the sequence of yesterday, today, and tomorrow, but in the ever-present today. Like Saint Augustine, Bergson regarded all time as an "eternal present"—yesterday as the present memory of the past, tomorrow as the present anticipation of the future. In Bergson's philosophy, time is to eternity as the brain is to the mind. Time measures off the separate units of experience—the minutes, the hours, the days, the years. Eternity combines all experience into a comprehensive *Now*. Time is a measure of the perceptions of the intellect. Eternity is the measureless energy apprehended by the intuition. Time is a succession of dead moments which symbolize the one inclusive living moment of eternity. "By a single intuition it is possible to grasp all existence in a single moment"—all the points of time, like all the points of a poem or a tree, in a single flash.

Time, then, is the servant of death; eternity, the master of life. Time is material; eternity, spiritual. And, as the spirit is forever breaking away from the shackles of matter, so eternity is forever breaking away from the shackles of time. For eternity is the process of development, the vital urge, the creative evolution of the universe, the identification of man with mankind, of mankind with God.

And "God, thus defined, is action, freedom, unceasing life." God and man, God *in* man, can overcome every obstacle, survive every sorrow, rebound after every defeat, advance forever upward into a fresh rebirth. This divine spirit—the energy called the vital urge—means unending self-creation, from the lowest forms of life to the highest. "The animal takes its stand on the plant, man bestrides the animal, and the whole of humanity . . . is one immense army galloping beside and before and behind each of us in an overwhelming charge able to beat down every resistance and to clear the most formidable obstacles, perhaps even death."

### *Summary*

In order to clarify our ideas about the riddle of existence, we shall now take—to use the Bergsonian expression—an intuitive

glance at the successive solutions to the riddle as offered by the outstanding philosophers of the centuries. We shall try to determine, if we can, whether there is not some little basis for agreement among the variously discordant points of view. Are the different philosophers hopelessly at strife with one another in their effort to arrive at the truth? Or are they merely stationed at different vantage points so that each of them may observe a relative part of the truth from his own particular angle? Is it possible, perhaps, to combine these various angles of speculation into a comprehensive view of the Absolute?

Let us see.

From the earliest dawn of philosophical speculation we find an instinctive human belief that the entire universe is alive. "Heaven lies about us in our infancy"—the infancy of mankind as well as of man. The early Egyptians, Babylonians, Persians, Hindus, Chinese, Greeks—all of them came by different roads to the same conviction: There is a universal life-force that is self-impelled, self-created, all-inclusive, all-pervasive, divine. This life-force is a single ocean divided into many waves, a single rhythm composed of many beats, a single soul diffused into many bodies, a single existence observed through many minds. The fundamental belief in the rhythmic singleness of life is manifested in the origin of the very words that describe the world. *Cosmic* is derived from the Greek, and it means *orderly, harmonious*. *Universe* is derived from the Latin, and it means the *comprehensive fusion of the many into the one*.

This universal stream of life receives various interpretations in the various schools of the earliest philosophers. Yet the fundamental meaning is invariably the same. The Egyptian view of the stars as conscious bodies with flaming souls, the Babylonian picture of the world as a plant emerging out of the seed of chaos, the Persian description of the forces of nature as the living collaborators with God in the progressive building of the universe, the Hindu doctrine of the identity between the individual soul and the World Soul, the Chinese conception of the ceaseless current of energy from the whole to the part and from the part to the whole, and the early Greek representation of the infinite storehouse of vitality which gives rise to the finite objects of the world—all these theories add

up to one basic idea. *Everything is alive, and life goes progressively on forever.*

Along with this basic idea, we find two supplementary propositions in the work of the early philosophers:

1. Life keeps on developing like a plant. It grows—that is, it evolves—from lower to higher forms. The spirit of man, like a flame, leaps forever upward. Whether in the form of transmigration or of evolution, the process of life is constantly on the move to break away from the petty selves of the many to the sublime Self of the One.

2. We are able to grasp this sublime unity of existence by means of a sixth sense—our sense of introspection. We can best see the truth not with the outward eye of the body but with the inward eye of the mind. The artist, the poet, the seer, everybody else in his rare moments of ecstasy, has experienced this communion of the individual with the universal. This is not merely a doctrine of ancient (or of modern) philosophy; it is the common intuition of all mankind.

Thus far, as we see, we have found an internal agreement in all the external disagreements of most of the early philosophers. Examining the world from their diverse points of view, they converge upon a single focus of progressive energy in a living world. When we advance from the earlier philosophers to Plato and to Aristotle, we find the focus substantially unchanged. The world of Plato is a world of living ideas—an ordered pattern of goodness and justice and beauty which it is our business to incorporate into our daily lives. Existence, in other words, is the pursuit of an ideal—an upward reaching of the soul toward the heights. The world of Aristotle—in spite of his quarrel with Plato—is also a world of living ideas. While Plato's ideas are represented as patterns existing in heaven, Aristotle's ideas are defined as activities residing within the objects of the earth. The Platonic idea is an external *attraction*; the Aristotelian idea is an internal *compulsion*. The two philosophers, however, agree on one point, and on this point they are at one with nearly all their philosophical predecessors: Life is an eternal striving from a lower to a higher form of existence. There is a living, driving purpose that guides our destiny.

And now we come from the Idealists to Epicurus, the father of

Materialism. The world, said Epicurus, is built out of atoms. Yet these atoms, he was constrained to admit, are not lifeless bits of mechanism. On the contrary, they are imbued with a living purpose, a *free will*, to swerve from their course and to combine with one another into a pageant of progressive evolution.

We may briefly pass over the Cynics and the Skeptics. For the Cynics denied without philosophizing, and the Skeptics philosophized without denying—or accepting. Both the Cynics and the Skeptics were poets rather than philosophers. They played with ideas as with soap bubbles, blowing them out for their own amusement, chuckling over their iridescence, and shrugging their shoulders when they vanished into thin air.

Quite different, however, were the Stoics. For they sincerely grappled with reality, and they discovered something very closely akin to the discovery of the earlier philosophers. The world, they declared, has a living soul. And the purpose of the soul, in accordance with the pattern of nature, is to unite all men into the fellowship of mankind and all mankind into fellowship with God.

The same idea, from still another angle, stands out in the philosophy of Plotinus. Existence, said Plotinus, is a hierarchy of living minds. Every lower mind is an emanation from a higher mind and is inspired, by the example from above, to imitate it and to become absorbed into it. The immediate object of life is to recognize the relationship between all the minds, from the lowest to highest. The ultimate purpose of man is to attain complete identity with God.

When we examine reality from the standpoint of the Christian philosophers, we catch another glimpse of the selfsame vision. The spirit of man is deathless. For the soul of man is embarked upon a pilgrimage to the Soul Divine from which it came. God is forever creating the world out of His eternal love; and all created things are forever impelled, through love for one another, to become as godlike as possible.

With the dawn of the scientific age, we find our vision supplemented by the telescope, the microscope, and the test-tube. Yet the center of truth appears ever the same. The philosophers of the Renaissance saw the world as a universal substance that lives under the guidance of an eternal mind. The individual life is a thread en-

dowed with the will to weave itself into the divine pattern of the whole—the creative plan of God.

This divine pattern, this creative plan, continues to be the rallying point in most of the philosophical systems that come after the Renaissance. Descartes, following a pathway of doubt, arrives at a clear conception of the universe as a material substance, vitalized by a deathless spirit, and stimulated to grow into something better through the guidance of God. Spinoza combines matter and spirit and God into a single living unity. Everything in the world is deathless and divine—an integral part of God. Leibniz depicts existence as the co-ordinated activity of innumerable souls attuned to the harmony of creation. Berkeley translates all matter into a living spirit—an ever-developing and ever-dominant idea in God's mind. Even Hume, the avowed disbeliever, adds a footnote of affirmation to his philosophy of denial. He rejects the world, but accepts God. Kant, examining reality from the double angle of the human instinct for beauty and the human sense of duty, concludes that behind the illusory world of our perceptions there is the genuine world of our conceptions (or intuitions). In this genuine world, God is the producer and man the actor of a divine drama. Man, prompted by his soul under the direction of God, is free to play his role as he will. And in the progress of the play there comes to all of us the occasional instinctive flash that every role is an equally important contribution to the unraveling of the divine plot. For death is not the end of our assignment. It merely marks a change of costume and scenery. The play goes on.

And now, in our quest for the secret of reality, we descend from Heaven to Hegel. Yet even here we find a glimmering of the universal truth. "In spite of the apparent disunity on the surface," he said, "a rational and definite pattern lies at the heart of things." Existence is the progressive coalescence of life, the everlasting movement of opposition into composition, the ultimate synthesis of the relative into the Absolute. To be sure, Hegel identified the Absolute with the German state. But there was no reason why he should not have identified it with the entire world. The important thing about his metaphysics is not its surface disunity but its basic conformity with the metaphysics of most of the other philosophers. *Reality is a continuous and creative current of life.*

This current of life, in Schopenhauer's philosophy, becomes a will to live. Acknowledging his debt to the ancient Hindu philosophers, he represented the universal stream of vitality as an ever-persistent drive. Personally, owing perhaps to a constitutional sluggishness, he regarded this impulse to activity as an evil thing. But, in common with his predecessors, he agreed that it is the *introductive* and *reproductive* spirit of the universe—the *internal* and *eternal* energy that permeates all reality.

This idea receives another corroboration in the material philosophy of Spencer. Though the world is a machine, it is nevertheless—he confesses—a *growing* machine. Science can only record the mechanism. But revelation—or intuition—can apprehend the growth. Behind the experience of our senses there is a reality of sense. And at the core of this reality lies not death but life.

Life, too, is the dominant note in Nietzsche's philosophy. The universe is a manifestation of an ever-resurgent energy—an urge to get ahead, to *grow*, to advance from man to superman, from superman to God. Nietzsche differs from the other philosophers in that he regards the progressive evolution of life as competitive rather than coöperative. But he agrees with the other philosophers in his acceptance of reality as *a life of progress*.

William James goes a step beyond the others. But he takes this step along the selfsame path. There are as many solutions to the riddle of existence, he declares, as there are human minds. For each mind is a different observation tower from which the individual can get his own particular view of reality. And the composite view of all mankind is the total truth. This truth, the experience of mankind has shown, is an ever-living aspiration in the individual to reach out toward the embracement of the whole. For the stream of life flows into many channels—to be purified and revitalized for its return toward its original divine source.

The divine source of life is for a moment obscured in the intellectualism of Santayana. But even to this disciple of the "scientific fact" the substance of life is of greater significance than the shadow of death. He calls himself a materialist, yet he admits that he doesn't know what matter is. "Perhaps it is an electric charge"—an all-pervading flow of energy, "*the endless order and vitality of the world in which I live.*" This vitality is a deathless wave which,

when it flows into the vessel of a human life, envelopes him with a sense of his "pervasive presence in the society of the immortals." And so here again we find the focal idea of a living, growing, harmonious and united world.

Finally, in the philosophy of Bergson, this idea comes to its maturest expression. *Élan Vital*, Living Impulse, Creative Evolution, Divine Growth. Reality is a restless and deathless aspiration of all things above and below to move toward some unknown but grandiose goal of existence. Man blunders so long as he strives; but through all his blundering he possesses the instinct of the one true way. This instinctive turning toward the light, as a plant turns toward the sun, is brought home to us through the revelation of the mystic, the intuition of the philosopher, the devotion of the martyr, the inspiration of the poet, the hope and the faith and the charity of the common man. The human spirit, the spirit of the world, is forever on the march. "The universe," said Walt Whitman, the philosophers' poet, "is a road for traveling souls."

And thus we have taken a composite view of the history of metaphysics. Instead of emphasizing the quarrels between the various schools and individuals, we have tried to find a mutual basis for understanding. And we have found this basis, I believe, in the almost universal conception—either expressed or implied—that existence is a forward and upward journey toward spiritual unanimity.

But a few questions still remain. What is matter? What is mind? What is life? Who are we—you and I? Where do we come from? What are we doing here? Whither are we bound for? And—what is the truth, as we see it today?

#### WHAT IS MATTER?

In the science of the nineteenth century, matter was regarded as the *concrete stuff* out of which the universe is built—"the substance that may be felt, weighed, or seen, or that may in any way be known to have physical properties, as stone, wood, glass, water, air, or steam." The material body of the world, like the material body of man, was a "thing of volume and weight," insensible, lifeless,



inert. But the scientists of the twentieth century began to question this picture of the material universe. How, they asked themselves, can *motionless* matter explain the principle of *motion*? And how can *lifeless* matter explain the origin of *life*? In their effort to answer these questions, the scientists made an astonishing discovery. The essence of matter, they found, is neither motionless nor lifeless, but is pervaded with energy and vitality.

Indeed, matter *is* energy, *is* vitality. Matter, to state it paradoxically, is non-material. The atom—that “final solid substance of a concrete universe”—is no longer final or solid. The experiments of the scientists have split it apart into a charge of electric power.

This electric charge is not an *object*, but a *force*. It has neither length nor width nor thickness nor weight; it just has propulsive power. Somewhere in our observation of matter, dimensions disappear, and that which we have known as a *thing* becomes a *quality*. The *dead body* of the world, in its final analysis, becomes a *living spirit*. “The life of matter” is now a common phrase in scientific circles. “In the heart of matter,” writes Dr. Will Durant, “there is something not material, possessed of its own spontaneity and life.” That which to our senses appears as a solid object is in reality a restless current of action and reaction. The stars and the planets in the heavens and the electrons and the protons in a block of steel are equally deceptive to our limited senses. The stars, the planets, the electrons, the protons—all alike are worlds of undulating, dancing, whirling motion—the spirited and ceaseless effervescence of life. The Latin poet, Lucretius—ancient sponsor of the atomic theory—has illustrated this idea in a striking simile:

“When mighty legions, waging the mimicry of war, fill with their movements all the plain, the glitter of it lifts itself to the sky, and the whole earth gleams with brass, and from below rises the noise of the tramping men, and the mountains, stricken by the shouting, re-echo the voices to the stars of heaven . . . And yet there is some spot on the high hills from which all these moving men seem to stand still and merely to shine as a spot of brightness on the plains.”

All matter, then, is merely a motion. The atom, still *invisible*, is no longer *indivisible*. And the division of the atom means the unleashing of its power. Destroy the *substance*, and you release the

*essence*. When the block of steel is crumbled away, when the earth is burned into a cinder, when the constellations are reduced to a spiral of smoke and the smoke itself is dissolved into the void, what then? Will death write the *finis* to the drama of life? It would seem that the answer is *no*. For the body of the world will merely be decomposed into its atoms, and at the heart of every atom there will still *exist*, and *persist*, the energy of motion, the impetus of electricity, the instinct for organization, the principle of growth, *the spirit of life*.

#### WHAT IS MIND?

The old witticism—"What is matter? never mind; what is mind? no matter"—no longer holds true. For science has now discovered that *matter and mind are one*. Mind is the energy of matter, and matter is the form of mind.

But can energy exist without the form? Can the mind exist without the brain? Can life exist without the body? Let Professor J. E. McTaggart answer this question: "It does not follow, because a self which has a body cannot get its data except in connection with that body, that it would be impossible for a self without a body to get data in some other way . . . If a man is shut up in a house, the transparency of the windows is an essential condition of his seeing the sky. But it would not be prudent to infer that, if he walked out of the house, he could not see the sky because there was no longer any glass through which he might see it."

The dream of the psychologist to establish the brain as the director of the mind has been completely shattered. If mental reactions depended upon physical actions, we should find a lesion in the brain for every lapse in the memory. No scientist as yet has been able to decipher upon the *finite* tablet of the brain the recorded origin of an *infinite* conception of the mind. In what hidden recess of the multifold convolutions of the brain lies the seat of the consciousness that I am I and nobody else? "Materialism," admitted the materialist philosopher, Thomas Huxley, "can not explain consciousness."

Matter, mind, energy, spirit, life—are they not in reality different terms that define the selfsame principle? Is not the mind of Shakespeare a continuation of the identical stream of energy that ani-

mates the matter of the atom, the spirit of mankind, the life of the world? The mind of a man is not the servant but the tenant of his brain. It has its own capacity, its own identity, its own vitality, either *within* or *without* the brain. The brain is merely a garment which temporarily clothes the mind. It is—to quote an Oriental poet—"a pillow upon which the mind reclines during the fitful sleep of its earthly existence. When the mind is awakened from its sleep, it discards the pillow and then truly begins to live."

This is the poetical expression of what seems to be a scientific fact. At the foundation of all existence is an unconquerable, propelling, growing power which, for want of a better term, we may call *mind-matter*. That is, it is a living energy which in one of its manifestations appears as a poem of Homer, a sonata of Beethoven, a formula of Einstein, a parable of Jesus, an aspiration of the human for the divine, and in another of its manifestations appears as a body, a rock, a flower, a meteor, a planet, a star. The mind of matter and the matter of mind are but the opposite engravings upon the coinage of truth.

#### WHO ARE WE—YOU AND I?

If matter and mind are but different aspects of a single current of energy called life, what are the individual drops of living organism known as you and I? We are separate bits of consciousness impelled to seek identity, through sympathetic understanding, with the unified consciousness of the whole. Listen to the modern Hindu philosopher, Vivekananda: "This separation between man and man, man and woman, man and child, nation from nation, earth from moon, moon from sun, this separation . . . does not exist, it is not real. It is merely apparent, on the surface. In the heart of things there is unity still."

Vivekananda defines this universal consciousness as *God*. "The highest truth is this: God is present in all beings. They are His multiple forms. There is no other God to seek." And the only way to seek Him is to cherish—that is, to put yourself in the place of, and thus to become identified *with*—your fellow men. "He alone serves God who serves all mankind."

Somewhat more prosaic, but none the less compelling, is the conception of the universal consciousness as presented in the philos-

ophy of the West. This philosophy represents God as the Absolute Self in whom you and I, and all the other individuals of the world, are embraced as relative—and *related*—selves. Every individual, as we know, is an organization of many selves. Thus, for example, each of us has his democratic self in his sociability and his aristocratic self in his aloofness; his adventurous self in his restlessness and his peaceful self in his tranquillity; his rebellious self in his defiance and his submissive self in his obedience; his assertive self in his belligerency and his magnanimous self in his pity. And over and above them, and uniting them all, is the contemplative self which, in the words of the American poet, Eunice Tietjens, "swings sheer out of life . . . and loses sense of boundaries and impotence."

This contemplative self, which unites all the other selves within the individual, is like the white radiance which unites all the colors within the spectrum. And the contemplative Self of the Absolute is the radiant fusion of all the individual selves in the universe.

And the whole, or the Absolute Self—call it God if you will—knows infinitely more than the part, or the individual self. The knowledge of God is to the knowledge of man as the knowledge of the performer of a sonata is to the knowledge of the listener. To the listener who hears the melody for the first time, the progress of the composition has a past, a present, and a future. The past is the part he has already heard; the present is the note he hears now; the future is the part he has not heard as yet. But to the performer, the entire sonata exists as a consistent and persistent present—a totality known to him at once in all its component parts. History to God is an already composed and familiar melody. To man, it is an unfamiliar composition heard for the first time.

But as the melody keeps on unfolding, we become gradually more and more aware of the general theme. We begin to see the interrelationship between the parts and the whole—between you and me and the essence of the world. From the individual to the family, from the family to the precinct, from the precinct to the state, from the state to the nation, from the nation to humanity, from humanity to all things, and from everything to God.

And what is the formula that fuses all these relatives into the Absolute? For the answer to this question let us visit the great French scientist, Laplace, on his death bed. His friends are trying

to console him with the importance of his discoveries and the celebrity of his books. "But these," he shakes his head sadly, "are not the essential things in life."

"What then?" they ask.

And the old man, gasping for his final breath, whispers, "Love."

## II

# The Enigma of Human Reason — Logic

### *The Science of Thought*

**M**ETAPHYSICS is the poetry of logic, and logic is the science of thought. Since all thought has but a single object, the discovery of truth, logic is the survey of the human mind in its search for the truth.

This search, on the human plane, is a journey toward the province of reason through the vehicle of words. It is of the utmost importance in logic, as in life, to understand the meaning of words. "The ill use of words," observes John Locke, "results in errors and obscurity, mistakes and confusion . . . There is some reason to doubt whether language, as it has been employed, has contributed more to the improvement or hindrance of knowledge amongst mankind."

The necessity for the correct use of words—that is, the correct definition of terms—may be seen from the following story. The Greek philosopher, Protagoras, made an agreement with Euthalus to teach him the art of successful pleading. The fee for this service was to be paid in two parts: one half when Euthalus was fully instructed, the other half when he won his first case in court. When the instruction was finished, Euthalus paid half of the fee in accordance with the agreement. But he kept putting off the beginning of his practice, until finally Protagoras brought suit for the other half.

Now Protagoras, it seemed, had a watertight case. For this is the argument he offered in his behalf:

"If Euthalus loses this case, he must pay me, by the judgment of the court; and if he wins it, he must pay me, in accordance with the terms of the contract.

"But he must either lose it or win it.

"Therefore he must pay me."

But, in rebuttal, Euthalus offered an argument which seemed equally watertight:

"If I win the case, I ought not to pay, by the judgment of the court; and if I lose it, I ought not to pay, by the terms of the contract.

"But I must either win it or lose it.

"Therefore I ought not to pay."

The trouble with these two arguments is that they are based upon words whose meaning is not clearly defined. If we study the meaning *behind* the words rather than the words themselves, we observe that there was but one issue involved in the controversy between Protagoras and Euthalus. The teacher was to receive the second half of his fee only *when and if* the pupil became a professional lawyer and won his first case. If the pupil had died immediately upon the completion of his course, there would have been no ground for legal action. Likewise, if the pupil decided, upon the completion of his course, that he didn't want to adopt the legal profession, there was no cause for action. The trial, therefore, was illegal and both arguments were frivolous—all because of the misinterpretation of the little word *when*. This word, in the contract between the teacher and the pupil, had not only a *temporal* but a *conditional* connotation. What the contract meant to say, in effect, was that the pupil was to complete the payment *at the time* and *on the condition* that he would become a professional lawyer, would try a case in court, and would win the case.

To put this matter in another way, the trial between the teacher and the pupil was in reality not a genuine first case, but an *actual second case* based upon an *imaginary first case*—the case which the pupil was supposed to have tried and won. With such a flimsy foundation for an argument, it was very easy for the one man to show that black was white, and for the other man to prove that white was black.

There is an interesting sequel to the above story. The judges at

the trial, we are told, took the case under advisement and promised to render a decision in a hundred years.

All of us are constantly indulging in the careless interpretation of words. Many a heated argument arises from the fact that the two antagonists employ the same words but with different meanings. If only they took the trouble to define their words at the outset, they could have avoided the argument.

It is the business of logic to avoid unnecessary arguments, and to point the way to the center of agreement across the fringes of misunderstanding, through the accurate employment of speech.

### *The False Logic of the Sophists*

The proper use of language is to *reveal* thought. Too often, unfortunately, language has been used to *conceal* thought. This was especially true among the Sophists of ancient Greece. A *Sophist*, to give the word a modern translation, is a *wise guy*—a man who is more anxious to show off his cleverness than to seek for the truth. The Sophists were a group of professional philosophers who taught the young men of Athens how to argue with equal plausibility on both sides of a question. They deliberately used a false logic in order to mislead their unsophisticated countrymen. There is no fixed standard, they said, of truth or falsehood, of good or evil, of right or wrong. Man is the measure of all things. That is, a thing is true or good or right for you if it is to your advantage; it is false or evil or wrong for you if it is to your disadvantage.

This was the illogical philosophy of the aggressor. Carried to its conclusion, it would reduce the world to a jungle and society to a den of thieves. "The Sophists are entirely in the wrong," said Socrates. "Man is not the measure of all things; and truth and goodness and justice are based not upon individual advantages or disadvantages, but upon absolute standards. Let us stop using our terms loosely. Let us begin to *define* them."

This effort at the *definition of terms* was the beginning of Logic.

### *The Logic of Socrates and Plato*

The logic of Socrates consisted in pinning down the nature of a word—such as *beauty*, *temperance*, *justice*—by seeking out the



views of a number of individuals in different walks of life. Having done this, he eliminated the points on which they disagreed and then constructed his definition out of the points on which they agreed. Thus, for example, *justice* is not, as some say, *the telling of truth*. It is not, as others maintain, *the payment of debts*. In like manner, it is not, as still others assert, *the reward of the good*, or *the punishment of the bad*, or *the right of the weak*, or *the interest of the strong*. The real definition of *justice*—that is, the definition on which all men (according to Socrates) would agree—is this:—*the harmonious interaction between the various interests of the individual, and between the various individuals and the state*.

This sort of *definition through elimination*, it has been pointed out, is like trying to find the place where a thing *is* by looking for it in all the places where it is *not*. The method is too roundabout. Plato improved upon this method by what he called the system of *definition through division*. "The thing to be defined is first referred to its class; and then, by a series of divisions, each class is separated into two species. At each division we ask which of the two species includes the thing to be defined. We then retain the including species and reject the other. Finally we arrive at the definition by adding together all the species that we have retained."

The process is much simpler than it sounds. Let us, for example, try to define man. *Man* belongs to the class of *living creatures*. Living creatures may be divided into animal and non-animal. Man is an *animal*. Animals may be divided into rational and non-rational. Man is *rational*. And thus, by retaining the relevant and rejecting the irrelevant parts, we get our definition. *Man is a rational, animal, living creature*.

The Platonic practice of definition by division was the forerunner of the so-called *deductive* system of logic as developed in the philosophy of Aristotle.

### *Aristotle—the Father of Modern Logic*

*Deduction* is the process of ascertaining a *specific fact* from a *general law*. For example:

It is a general law that all men are mortal.

Socrates is a man.

Therefore it is a specific fact that Socrates is mortal.

This process of deducing a fact from a law assumes, in Aristotle, the form of a *syllogism*. A *syllogism* is an argument consisting of three propositions:

*First*, the statement of the general law.

*Second*, the instance that relates the general law to a specific case.

*Third*, the definition of the specific case as a proved fact.

Between the first term and the last term, as we see, there is a middle term that connects the other two. Every syllogism must have this connecting link in the chain of the argument if the argument is to lead to a logical proof. Thus, to cite another syllogism:

All monkeys are animals.

A gorilla is a monkey.

Therefore a gorilla is an animal.

We must be careful, however, to have the *correct* link in our chain, or the argument will lead us to a ridiculous conclusion. Consider, for example, the following syllogism:

All monkeys are animals.

All men are animals.

Therefore all men are monkeys.

The fallacy with this argument is that while all monkeys are animals, not all animals are monkeys. Our connecting link should lead us to our specific conclusion from the *general proposition* that *all monkeys are animals*, rather than from the *particular qualification* that *some animals are monkeys*.

The following is another example of a fallacious conclusion arising from an incorrect linking between the first term and the last:

All birds have feathers.

A pillow has feathers.

Therefore a pillow is a bird.

Another fallacy we must be careful to avoid is the use of a term with a double meaning. For example:

All interference is subject to a fifteen-yard penalty.

Static in the air is interference.

Therefore static is subject to a fifteen-yard penalty.

These are but a few of the many possible fallacies arising from the misuse of the Aristotelian system of deductive reasoning. These fallacies have been enumerated, classified, divided and subdivided into a veritable labyrinth of rules and diagrams. But it is well for

us to remember the principle of *Occam's Razor*. William of Occam was a famous logician of the fifteenth century who declared that we must "cut away" all the unnecessary regulations of our philosophical inquiries. "It is vain," he said, "to employ more rules when you can do with less." We shall therefore try to summarize all the rules of the Aristotelian syllogism within a single comprehensive formula: *Whatever is true of a whole class is true of everything in that class.*

Take the following anecdote from Thackeray, slightly paraphrased, to illustrate this point:

"If all my penitents told you their stories," said the Abbé to a group of his friends, "they would astonish you. Do you know, for example, that my very first penitent was a murderer?"

Just then a nobleman of the neighborhood entered the room. "You there, Abbé?" he exclaimed. And then he turned to the Abbé's friends. "Do you know, ladies, that I was the Abbé's first penitent?"

This is but another way of emphasizing Mark Twain's logical deduction from his study of mankind. "If the truth were known about all of us," he said, "every one of us would deserve a hanging at least once in his lifetime."

The logic of Thackeray's story and of Mark Twain's epigram is Aristotelian, syllogistic, deductive. It argues from the general to the particular, from the class to the individual. All valid reasoning, maintained Aristotle, can be reduced to a system of syllogisms. This is the logic of *proof*. It proves the part from the existence of the whole.

But there is also another kind of logic—the logic of *discovery*. This logic argues from the particular to the general. It infers the whole from the existence of the part. This is *Inductive* as contrasted with *Deductive* reasoning.

Inductive logic, or *Induction*, is the process of ascertaining a *general law* from a *specific fact*. This is the method of science—the building of old bits of observation and information into new theories. It is, for example, the method of the biologist, who studies many specimens of living things in order to discover the principle of life. (Even in the military sense, induction means the gathering of many individuals into an army.)

Now Aristotle was a scientist as well as a philosopher. He recognized the importance of *Induction* as well as of *Deduction*. He knew that the mind, in its journey toward the truth, must shuttle continually from principle to fact and from fact to principle. We analyze the universe into its separate parts, and then we synthesize the parts into a comprehensive whole.

The logic of Aristotle, therefore, was designed to cover the entire method of philosophic investigation and scientific verification. To use the apt expression of John Dewey, it was the "complete act of thought."

Unfortunately, however, Aristotle paid far greater attention to deduction than he did to induction. And he did this for a very good reason. The scientific method of experimental verification, owing largely to the absence of precise mechanical instruments, had made but little progress in Aristotle's day. Aristotle's logic, like his science, was a sequence of ingenious proofs rather than a consequence of genuine discoveries. His universe was built upon a triangle of syllogisms.

### *The Logic of the Middle Ages*

The philosophers who followed Aristotle adopted his deduction and forgot about his induction. They were half-baked logicians. They reduced all truth to a syllogism, and then they degraded the syllogism to an absurdity. Their philosophy, instead of developing from words into ideas, degenerated from ideas into words. Throughout the Middle Ages the logicians wasted their time on abstractions such as the following:

"If angels exist outside of space, and if a point has no real magnitude in space, how many angels can sit on the point of a pin?"

One of the favorite disputations of the medieval philosophers was based upon the problem of the rope and the pig:

"When a man drives a pig to market, is the pig held by the man or by the rope?"

The Medieval Age was a period of sloppy living and sloppy thinking. Dirt was a necessity, owing to the scarcity of water and the inadequacy of sanitation. But the logicians of the period turned the necessity into a virtue. Uncleanliness, they said, is next to Godliness. For dirt is matter, and matter is the body of the world, and

the body of the world is the receptacle of life, and all life is equally precious in the eyes of Heaven. Association with vermin was regarded as the badge of saintliness. "A louse," said a medieval writer, "is a pearl of God."

The logicians of the Dark Ages were "instructed with learned ignorance." The logic of Aristotle had disintegrated into the logic-chopping of the scholastics. The tree of knowledge had been whittled down into the splinters of mystification. Frequently, in the battle of syllogisms between the orthodox and the heterodox, the only outcome was a paradox. "All discussion," to paraphrase Anatole France, "appeared sterile. The best opinion was to have no opinion at all."

Let us not, however, be too hard on the scholastic logicians of the Middle Ages. These men lived in a non-scientific world. The day of the microscope and the telescope had not as yet arrived. Their conception of reality could be no wider than the perception of their senses. It was to their credit, rather than to their discredit, that they attempted to pierce the veil beyond the world of sense. Their attempt, to be sure, often led them into a world of nonsense. But, in spite of their absurd syllogisms and their controversial subtleties, they succeeded in establishing thought, no less than sensation, as a measure of reality. Their tendency to mistake the word for the thought was due not so much to the incompetency of the medieval mind as to the inadequacy of human speech. The scholastic philosophers failed to advance the science of logic because they used words, instead of instruments, to split hairs. A word, however sharply defined, can never pierce directly to the heart of truth. "What is reality?" asked Saint Augustine. "If no one inquires of me, I know; if I wish to explain to him who inquires, I know not." The scholastics over-explained their words and thus committed the error of over-refining their concrete ideas into subtle abstractions.

But they did aim at the "rational world of ideas" beyond the "irrational world of the senses." It was the scholastic philosophers who helped to pave the way for Descartes. "I know that I exist—not because I see or hear or taste or smell or touch, but because I *think*."

The thinking of the scholastic period sharpened the human mind for the observation of the scientific age.

*Bacon's Examination of Human Error*

Francis Bacon reestablished logic as a science founded upon perception rather than as a philosophy based upon conception. In the journey toward the truth, he said, the evidence of the senses is more important than the speculation of the mind.

Bacon's logic was but a tributary to the scientific current of the day. The human mind, in its pursuit of knowledge, had entered a new stage. With Copernicus, Kepler, and Galileo, the experimental phase of learning had begun. The physicist William Gilbert, founder of the science of electro-magnetism, had proclaimed the "new style of philosophizing" as opposed to the "old dreaming of things that are not." This new philosophy, he said, begins with what "we may handle and may perceive with the senses"; and it leads to the discovery of "hidden causes" from the observation of "known facts."

This manifesto provided Francis Bacon, the friend of Gilbert, with the starting point for his new logic. In his *Novum Organum*—the famous "foundation of modern thought"—he set forth his preference for the scientific method of *Induction* as opposed to the scholastic method of *Deduction*. "Man . . . understands as much as his observations . . . permit him; and neither knows nor is capable of more." Away from the abstractions of the syllogism! Back into the laboratory of nature! Study your facts, classify them, and integrate them into a principle of truth. "We ought to be neither like spiders, which spin things out of their own insides, nor like ants, which merely collect, but like bees, which both collect and arrange."

For, by the process of collecting and arranging, we can interpret old facts into new principles. The trouble with the old logic, said Bacon, is that it merely proves what we already know. It does not enable us to make any new discoveries. The sun shines, the old logic tells us in effect, because it is bright; and it is bright because it shines. This sort of logic argues around in a circle. It does not go *beyond* the circle. What Bacon proposed to do was to carry the human mind from the little circle of the known into the extensive region of the unknown.

But before the mind can enter upon this adventure, it must

undergo a thorough Expurgation. It must cleanse itself of its prejudices—the false images, or Idols, that have led it astray.

An *Idol*, in Bacon's philosophy, is a deceptive notion—a word mistaken for a thought, a thought for a reality.

These Idols, said Bacon, may be classified under four heads: *Idols of the Tribe*, *Idols of the Cave*, *Idols of the Market Place*, and *Idols of the Theater*.

1. *Idols of the Tribe*. This class comprises the fallacies that are common to all mankind. It is commonly believed, for example, that things are as they appear to the human mind. "On the contrary," argues Bacon, "the human mind resembles those uneven mirrors which impart their own properties to different objects . . . and distort and disfigure them." We misrepresent these distortions as realities and translate our prejudices into a creed. We believe not what *is* true, but what we had rather *were* true. "It was well answered by him who was shown in a temple the votive tablets suspended by such as had escaped the peril of shipwreck, and was pressed as to whether he would then recognize the power of the gods . . . 'But where are the portraits of those that have perished in spite of their vows?'"

Our picture of the world is the product of an imperfect vision. We see but fragments of the truth, and these fragments all out of proportion with one another. The human mind jumps too easily from faulty observation to false conclusions. It must learn to take pains and to be patient. "It must not be supplied with wings, but rather hung with weights to keep it from leaping and flying." The imagination should be not the capricious master but the obedient servant of the intellect. For only in this way can the mind be cleansed of the *Idols of the Tribe*.

2. *Idols of the Cave*. These are the errors peculiar not to the tribe but to the individual. "Everyone . . . has a cave or den of his own, which refracts and discolors the light of nature." Some minds are analytic—they see the trees and not the forest; others are synthetic—they see the forest and not the trees. Thus we have the unphilosophical scientist on the one hand, and the unscientific philosopher on the other.

Moreover, every individual has a personal bias as a result of his heredity and training. Every man sees the world through the

colored spectacles of his nation, his business, his family, his political party and his church. Thus the world appears different to the American and the German, the manufacturer and the laborer, the bridegroom and the bachelor, the Republican and the Democrat, the Christian and the Jew. The true scientist, the true logician, will recognize the limitation of his own point of view and he will therefore try to correlate it with as many other viewpoints as possible. The Idols of the Cave will be abolished, and the millennium will be close at hand, when the poet can see the world with the eyes of the scientist and the scientist can view it with the heart of the poet.

3. *Idols of the Market Place.* These errors arise from the association of men with one another. "For men converse by means of language; but words are imposed according to the understanding of the crowd; and there arises, from a bad and inapt formation of words, a wonderful obstruction to the mind." Men talk loosely of *cause* and *effect*. But who knows the exact meaning of these words? What was the first cause? What will be the last effect? A hen, observed a wit, is merely the egg's ingenious way of creating another egg. What do we mean when we say "the causeless beginning of a chain of causes," or "the unmoved instigator of a series of motions"? Words, quibbles, subtleties, lies. It is of the utmost importance, said Bacon, to drive out from the language of science such vague and misleading expressions as the above. We must be merciless with our words if we want them to lead us to the truth. Like Socrates, Bacon declared that the errors of the market place must give way to a greater precision of speech. The beginning of logic is the accurate employment of words.

4. "Lastly, there are idols which have migrated into men's minds from the various dogmas of philosophers, and also from wrong laws of demonstration. These I call *Idols of the Theater*, because in my judgment all the received systems of philosophy are but so many stage-plays, representing worlds of their own creation after an unreal and scenic fashion . . . The stories invented for the stage are more compact and elegant, and more as we would wish them to be, than true stories out of history." Too often the philosopher, like the man in the street, conceives a fairy world of his heart's desire, and then tries to prove that it is the actual world in which he exists. The tragic poet, Sophocles, when told that he didn't



picture men *as they were*, retorted that he pictured them *as they ought to be*. Such a picture of men represents the fictitious world of the philosopher rather than the real world of God.

But in order to ascertain the nature of the real world, argued Bacon, we must scrap our deductions and dogmas. We must work not from propositions to observations, but from observations to propositions. "If a man will begin with certainties, he shall end in doubts; but if he will be content to begin in doubts, he shall end in certainties."

And thus logic, according to Bacon, is an inductive rather than a deductive science. But Bacon repeated the error of the medieval philosophers in accepting only half of Aristotle's method. To aim at the truth either by induction alone, or by deduction alone, is like hopping over a stony road on only one foot. In modern science it is just as important to begin with the hypothesis (or principle) and to verify the facts, as it is to begin with the facts and to discover the principle. Bacon declared that there is only one path to the discovery of truth—the way of *experimentation*. "This method . . . first lights the candle and then, by means of the candle, shows the way." But scientists like Newton and Einstein, and philosophers like Descartes and Spinoza, have demonstrated that there is also another way. These men, to continue Bacon's metaphor, abandoned the flicker of the candle to plunge into the darkness beyond; and having made their plunge, they found their way illuminated by the stars. In more prosaic language, these men worked from hypotheses (or propositions or formulas or laws) to facts, rather than from facts to laws. The mathematician no less than the physicist has made his contribution to the rational survey of the world. Logic, in its widest application, is a method not only of experimental science but of speculative thought.

Bacon therefore was wrong in his emphasis on induction as opposed to deduction. But he was right in his re-establishment of the solid science of thought as against the subtle jugglery of words.

### *The "Logical" Logic of Thomas Hobbes*

Hobbes, the secretary of Bacon, was the first of the modern logicians who walked on two feet. His method of reasoning was

based both upon *perception*, or the evidence of the senses, and upon *conception*, or the intuition of the intellect. Hobbes enjoyed what was perhaps the longest literary career in history. He published his first book at fourteen, and his last at eighty-seven. And at the end of his long life he said, "I am no wiser today than I was at the beginning."

For, unfortunately, the wisdom of man is a flame that is darkened by the smoke-screen of words. Without language, to be sure, there can be no ideas—no conception of *true* or *false*. But the very instrument that *expresses* our ideas *obscures* them.

The trouble with words is that they are self-contradictory. Take, for example, the words *good* and *bad*. A thing is good to me if it is the object of my desire; bad, if it is the object of my aversion. But *my desire* may be *your aversion*, and vice versa. You and I, therefore, can have no common basis for the understanding of these two words, *or of any words*. No matter how precisely defined, a word contradicts itself over and over again as it passes through a number of minds. Language, therefore, is *subjective* rather than *objective*. It expresses an individual attitude rather than a universal truth.

Because of this individual, subjective interpretation of words, men are always at war with one another. For they are unable to understand one another. Bees do not fight—declares Hobbes—because their agreement is instinctive; they do not use words to befuddle or to criticize one another.

The purpose of man, therefore, is to objectify his words as much as possible. He must learn to reason impersonally. Logic must become a demonstration of absolute principles rather than an expression of relative prejudices.

And the best medium for logic—indeed, the best of all sciences—is geometry. For here we have both formulas and facts that are true for all time, to all men, regardless of the shifting impermanence in the meaning of words.

### *The Geometric Reasoning of Spinoza*

Spinoza, like Hobbes, believed that geometry is the shortest distance between the mind of man and the center of truth. There are,

he said, four kinds of knowledge: 1. Hearsay testimony, such—for example—as the testimony I've heard from my mother that my grandfather was a good man. 2. Vague experience, as when the farmer "knows" it is going to rain—not because of a scientific formulation of the movement of the winds and the clouds, but because he generally feels a rheumatic twitch as a prelude to rainy weather. 3. Theoretical reasoning, as when I reason that the stars are much bigger than they appear, because I have observed that distant things appear much smaller than they are. 4. Intuitive knowledge—the faculty that enables us to see things and events in their eternal relationship toward one another. This, declared Spinoza, is the highest kind of knowledge.

It was this kind of knowledge—the contemplation of the world against the background of eternity—that Spinoza tried to apply to the formulation of his philosophy. And he presented this philosophy in geometric form. "Human thought can most clearly be expressed in mathematical propositions."

And thus logic, in Spinoza, is made almost independent of language. Yet even this absorption of speech into thought, Spinoza was modest enough to admit, gave him but a fractional insight into reality. "The things which I have been able to understand by this (intuitive and mathematical) knowledge . . . have been very few."

### *Locke's Interpretation of Reason*

Logic and language, said Locke, echoing the thought of Spinoza, should never be confused as one and the same thing. For it is possible, by a twist of the language, to make any absurdity sound logical. There is nothing illogical, for example, in the Irishman's recipe for making a gun: "Take a hole," said the Irishman, "and pour metal around it." Language at best is merely the servant of logic—and a very inadequate servant at that. The word *hole* may mean a number of things: *a hollow place in a solid body, an excavation, a mean lodging, a figurative breach* (I made a hole in his argument), *a predicament* (I got myself into a fine hole), *a narrow channel, a small harbor*, and so forth. We must be extremely careful, said Locke, in the acquisition and the dissemination of our knowledge

through the medium of language. We must never permit our reasons to be obscured by our words.

And Locke went on to examine the operations of the human reason. *Reason*, he said, does not consist (merely) of *sylogistic reasoning*. It also comprises, within its province, the knowledge of mathematical truth. Man was a reasoning creature before Aristotle. "God did not leave it to Aristotle to make him rational." Reason, as Locke understood it, consists of two parts: First, an inquiry as to what things we *know*; second, an investigation into those things that we *believe*. The first part deals with certainties; the second, with probabilities.

But since probabilities are not certainties, we must never impose our own beliefs upon others. The most logical attitude as between man and man is one of "mutual charity and forbearance." There is no reason why men cannot "maintain peace and the common offices of humanity and friendship in the diversity of opinions." Try to reason with your fellows, and then allow them to reason it out for themselves. "We shall do well not to treat others as obstinate and perverse because they will not renounce their own and receive our opinions . . . when it is more than probable that we are no less obstinate in not embracing some of theirs." No one of us, in our state of human fallibility, has a right to set himself up as the sole measure of the truth. "For where is the man that has uncontestable evidence of the truth of all that he holds, or of the falsehood of all he condemns; or can say that he has examined to the bottom all his own or other men's opinions?" Our intolerance is due not so much to the other fellow's as to our own ignorance. "There is reason to think that if men were better instructed themselves, they would be less imposing on others." Live and let live. Be bold to think your own thoughts, but beware of shackling the thoughts of other men.

And so Locke carried logic a step beyond his predecessors. Knowledge, he said, is derived from two sources: *External sensation*, and *internal sense*. This is another way of saying that logic is a process of *deduction* and *induction*. But in addition to these two requirements for logical thinking, there is a third. We may call this third requirement *coöperative toleration*. It is only through the mutual respect *for*, and the mutual understanding *of*, one another's

views that we can hope to approximate the truth. Instead of reasoning one against the other, said Locke, let us learn to reason together.

### *Hume's Assassination of Reason*

As a young man, David Hume was tutor to an insane laird. A philosopher and a lunatic living together in a secluded house. The master's moods were unpredictable. One day he pressed Hume to his heart. The next day he drove him out of the room. He purred like a kitten and barked like a dog. He leaped over the sofas and scrambled down the banisters. He crept stealthily over the carpets and sprang upon his tutor with a ghostly laugh. Finally they locked him up. He begged to see his tutor and discussed with him the question of human reason.

A fine specimen of reason, this crazy nobleman! But was he so different from the rest of the world? Wasn't the entire human effort at logic a crazy jumble of ideas without reason or rhyme, without purpose or plan? So thought Hume, and he proceeded to demolish the notion that man is a rational animal, or that the world is an orderly sequence of cause and effect. "I have discovered but one truth—that there is no truth."

Once, when he was invited to dinner at the house of a pious friend, he rose from the table and protested that he couldn't eat because there was an enemy present.

"An enemy?" asked his friend.

"Yes," he said pointing to a Bible that lay on the table. "Take it away!"

Religion, philosophy, science, literature, history, art—all these represent "nothing but a blind Nature . . . pouring forth from her lap, without discernment or parental care, her maimed and abortive children." The world is not a chain of connected links, and the mind is not an instrument that records a series of logical whys and wherefores. Our knowledge is composed of a patchwork of random sensations. We apprehend each sensation as it comes to us and impose upon the totality of these disconnected sensations a fictitious order which we illogically call a system of logic.

Thus we assume "facts" and "laws" which in reality have no existence. The best we can do is to classify our experience in terms

of greater or lesser probability. We can never talk of certainty. When we throw a rubber ball upon the ground a dozen times and see it rebound a dozen times into the air, we assume that on the thirteenth throw it will *probably*, but we do not know that it will *certainly*, rebound into the air again.

We know nothing, not even ourselves. "For my part, when I enter most intimately into what I call *myself*, I always stumble on some particular perception or other, of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure. I never catch *myself* at any time without a perception, and never can observe anything but the perception." And all other selves, declares Hume, are no more substantial than his own self. "I may venture to affirm of the rest of mankind that they are nothing but a bundle or collection of different perceptions, which succeed each other with inconceivable rapidity, and are in a perpetual movement."

In other words, we have no logical ideas about ourselves or about the rest of the world. We have merely a hodge-podge of impressions. These impressions may be right, or they may be wrong. But we have no way of judging them. "We cannot penetrate into the reason of things."

For there is no logical connection between things. "Nor is it from any other principle but custom operating upon the imagination that we can draw any inference from the appearance of one to the existence of another."

There is no reason, then, to accept anything—not even Hume's *condemnation* of reason. Even Hume himself realized that his logical refutation of logic was a case of the blindest leading the blind. "The skeptic," he said, referring to himself, "cannot defend his reason by reason."

Then why have any ideas at all? Why draw various conclusions from our experiences? For the sake of convenience, replied Hume. "If we believe that fire warms, or water refreshes, 'tis only because it costs us too much pains to think otherwise." What Hume's argument amounts to is this: How foolish it is to believe; but how comforting it is to be a fool!

And thus we find Hume logically, as we found him metaphysically, in a dead-end street. There is no intellectual difference, he suggested, between sanity and insanity. The martyr who tries to

save humanity and the madman who tries to destroy it are, according to Hume, equally divorced from the truth.

But Hume was wrong. He made too vague a distinction between the presumption of probability and the principle of certainty. There are various degrees of probability, some of which approach pretty close to certainty. For example, it is probable that tomorrow will be a bright day or a cloudy day, a rainy day or a snowy day, a cold day or a warm day. It is also probable that tomorrow will be a day on which the sun will rise. Of all these probabilities there is one which we can regard almost as a certainty. For millions of days within the life of man, for thousands of days within our own generation, the sun has risen every morning. Hence we have reason to expect that tomorrow the sun will rise again. A logic based upon a sufficient number of instances to establish a principle is a pretty sound logic for humanity to follow. For such a logic is true for all practical purposes. It is perfectly logical to believe that heat burns, water flows, starvation produces death, food satisfies the hunger, and sympathy soothes the heart. Hume denied the existence of reason. Yet in our daily intercourse, he confessed, "we must take it for granted." He called his skeptical doubt "a malady" of which he could "never be radically cured." (We have seen the same note expressed in his metaphysics.)

And yet he was anxious to be cured. For man is a creature who instinctively tries to build order out of chaos. "For this reason," writes the philosopher who would destroy all reason, "I take it for granted, whatever may be the reader's opinion at this present moment, that an hour hence he will be persuaded there is both an external and internal world." An external world of organization, and an internal world of logic.

### *Kant's Resurrection of Reason*

Hume was a negative rather than a positive philosopher. "We must," he said, "unreason ourselves." We must erase from our minds the notion that there is any order in the world. The mind is like a medieval syllogism. It can prove both sides of a question as equally plausible. "This," said Anatole France, the disciple of Hume, "is true. But the contrary is also true." The day, observes

the man in the street, is not the night. But, retorts the astronomer, the day *is* the night. While it is light in China, it is dark in America. It all depends on the point of view. And, adds Hume, the point of view merely defines appearances; it never discloses realities.

Our knowledge, therefore, is deceptive. Our so-called "truths" are only a jumble of sensations. Our science is a collection of probabilities that may at any moment be proved to be false. Experience is a question mark, and wisdom an empty slate.

This was Hume's negative contribution to logic. And it had its value. For it left the slate clean for greater minds to write upon. Let us, said Immanuel Kant, examine Hume's arguments, and see whether they are right. Even Hume admits that man is incurably rational. Suppose we follow this incurable rationalism and see where it leads. "My question is, what we can hope to achieve with reason, when all the material and assistance of experience are taken away?"

The experience of our senses, maintains Kant, is not the entire story. Our minds are more than a mere tangle of sensations. They are not passive receptacles of perception, but active instruments of thought. They organize our sensations, and correlate them and arrange them into a coherent and comprehensible world.

Our knowledge of the world, in other words, depends not only upon our experience, but upon a mental faculty which exists *over and above and before* our experience. "How far we can advance independently of all experience . . . is shown by the brilliant example of mathematics." A mathematical law—the law, for example, that two times two will always make four—is not a probability, but a certainty.

Hume is wrong, therefore, when he denies the existence of certainties in this world. And where there is certainty, there is logic. For logic is the process of eliminating the false and establishing the true. The truths of mathematics—and also of the other sciences, observes Kant—disprove the skepticism of Hume. These truths, inherent in the human mind, serve as the directors of our ideas. They enable us to transform chaos into order, random experiences into organized knowledge, individual observations into universal wisdom. And to grope from human wisdom to divine light.

Human wisdom, human *reason*, is more than sensation; more



than perception; more even than conception: It is organization. An idiot observes the same world as a Shakespeare. But only Shakespeare can weave it into a pattern of beauty and sense.

We live in an orderly world because we possess orderly minds. *Logical* minds. "The laws of logic and the laws of nature are one." The truths of philosophy are but interpretations of the laws of science, and the laws of science are but formulations of the principle of life.

And the principle of life is not a *probability*, but a *fact*. And the mind is not a passive observation but an active integration of this fact. And this active integration—that is, the organization of all facts into one comprehensive principle—is what we know as the science of human logic.

### *Mill's Five Laws of Logic*

Tracing his course from Bacon, and guiding it through the intricacies of human reason as attacked, defended or interpreted in the philosophy of Hobbes, Spinoza, Locke, Hume, and Kant, John Stuart Mill formulated the so-called "methods of experimental inquiry." These methods, declared Mill, serve (like those of Aristotle) as guide-posts both to the discovery and to the proof of causal connection. That is, they show the "cause-and-effect" relationship of things.

The word *cause*, like all other words, has been used rather loosely in logic as in life. Here are but a few examples of the ambiguous usage of this word:

He broke his leg because he slipped on a banana peel. He broke his leg because he was blind and couldn't see where he was going.

He died because of old age. He died because his heart gave out. He died because he had been born. (All men, said Mark Twain, die of one cause and one disease—life.)

The sugar melted because it was put into the teacup. It melted because it was soluble.

The Second World War was caused by economic depression. It was caused by the personal ambition of Hitler. It was caused by the sinfulness of mankind.

The War of 1914 was the cause of Johnny's being stung by a bee

in 1925. For the war led to a surplus of women. The surplus of women led to a greater number of old maids. The greater number of old maids led to the maintenance of a greater number of cats. The greater number of cats led to a greater destruction of field mice. The greater destruction of field mice led to a heavier grain production. The heavier grain production led to a greater number of fields left fallow. The greater number of fallow fields led to a greater clover acreage. The greater clover acreage led to a greater honey production. The greater honey production led to the purchase, by Johnny's father, of a number of beehives as a profitable investment. The purchase of the beehives led to Johnny's curiosity about bees and their habits. Johnny's curiosity led to his being stung by one of the bees.

The above examples show how careful we must be in our scientific and logical application of the terms *cause* and *effect*. As Professor Schiller aptly puts it, "persons, things, gods, devils, laws, miracles, antecedents, ends, science, magic, chance . . . were all considered capable of functioning as 'causes' and explaining the course of nature . . . And to this day great vagueness clings to the notion."

It was in his effort to clarify this vagueness that Mill formulated his methods for distinguishing the true causes from the false. Stripped of their heavy phraseology, these methods are as follows:

1. *The method of agreement.* If two or more events have only one factor in common, this one common factor is the cause of the two or more events. For example—if we find only one type of germ present in a number of typhoid cases, we have reason to infer that this germ is a cause of the typhoid cases under investigation. But this factor alone is insufficient for our scientific purposes. And so we must employ another method in addition to our Method of Agreement.

2. *The method of difference.* If two events have everything in common save one factor, and if this one factor occurs in the first but not in the second event, then this factor is the cause of the first event. For example—if two cases of sickness have fever, distress, cramps, a rash, and other factors in common, but if only the first case has a certain germ called the *typhoid germ*, we have reason to infer that this germ is a cause of the first case. In determining the cause of an event, it is just as important to eliminate

differences as it is to compile similarities. The gullible public is frequently deceived by the testimonial advertisements that represent a patent medicine as the cause of the recovery, or the cure, of certain diseases. They accept the statements of those who claim to have been cured by that medicine. But they fail to consider the testimony—omitted in the advertisements—of those who took that medicine and were not cured.

Yet this method, even if correctly applied, is not always available. It cannot be used, for example, in checking the claim of Bernard Shaw that he lived to an old age because he was a vegetarian. For we have no way of telling how long he might have lived if all the other factors of his life had been the same but if he had included meat, as well as vegetables, in his diet. There is an interesting story about a teetotaler who was honored, on his ninetieth birthday, with a banquet. The leading prohibitionist of the city delivered a speech in which he extolled temperance as the cause of the old fellow's longevity. In the midst of his speech he was interrupted by a drunkard who staggered into the room brandishing a bottle of whiskey in either hand. The chairman was about to drive him out, when the ninety-year-old teetotaler exclaimed: "Leave him alone; *this man is my father!*"

It takes more than perfunctory evidence to establish the cause of any event. And Mill goes on with his methods for sifting the evidence and selecting the cause.

3. *The joint method of agreement and difference.* This method is a little more complicated than the first two methods. But I shall try to simplify it. Mill's statement of the formula—why do so many philosophers hide the light of their meaning under a bushel of verbiage?—reads like a Chinese puzzle. "If two or more instances in which the phenomenon occurs have only one circumstance in common," writes Mill, "while two or more instances in which it does not occur have nothing in common save the absence of that circumstance, the circumstance in which alone the two sets of instances differ, is the . . . cause of the phenomenon." This method, translated into understandable language, may be interpreted somewhat as follows:

Suppose we take two groups of married people—the happy and the unhappy. Now if in one characteristic—let us say compatibility

—all the happy couples are alike, whereas all the unhappy couples lack this characteristic, we have good reason to believe that compatibility is a cause of happiness in marriage.

But, declares Mill, we need still further methods of reasoning if we are to reach conclusive causes. And he goes on to explain his next method.

4. *The method of residues, or remainders.* If a group of characteristics, such as A B C, has been found exclusively and invariably to precede a group of events, such as D E F, and if we have established A as the cause of D and B as the cause of E, we have ground for concluding that the remaining characteristic, C, is the cause of the remaining event, F. This simple method of addition and subtraction is, to quote Mill, "one of the most important among our instruments of discovery. Of all the methods of investigating laws of nature, this is the most fertile in unexpected results."

Yet even this method, when added to the other three, is not always enough. And so Mill advances still another method, "another highway to the truth."

5. *The method of concomitant variations.* "Whatever phenomenon varies in any manner whenever another phenomenon varies in some particular manner, is . . . a cause . . . of that phenomenon."

In order to illustrate this method of accompanying differences, Mill cites the discovery of the correlation between the moon and the tides. "When we find that all the variations in the position of the moon are followed by corresponding variations in the time and place of high water, the place being always either on the side of the earth which is nearest to, or on that which is most remote from, the moon, we have ample evidence that the moon is, wholly or partially, the cause which determines the tides."

These, then, are the five methods of scientific discovery and inductive reasoning as formulated by John Stuart Mill. Yet Mill, like Aristotle and Hobbes, recognized the necessity of establishing logic and science upon the double foundation of *induction* and *deduction*. "A revolution is peaceably and progressively establishing itself in philosophy, the reverse of that to which Bacon has attached his name. That great man changed the method of the sciences from deductive to experimental (or inductive), and it is now rapidly reverting from experimental to deductive."

What Mill advocated was a combination of the speculative and the experimental. Suppose, for example, a physician claims that mercury is a cure for a given disease. There are two ways, observes Mill, to discover the validity or the invalidity of that claim. "The deductive method (working from principles to facts) would set out from known properties of mercury, and known laws of the human body, and by reasoning from these, would attempt to discover whether mercury will act upon the body when in the morbid condition supposed, in such a manner as to restore health. The inductive method (working from facts to principles) would simply administer mercury in as many cases as possible, noting the age, sex, temperament, and other peculiarities of bodily constitution," and would then check up the results in a general medical proposition.

It is obvious that either of the above procedures, if used by itself, would be unfair to the patient. For the administration of medicine without the knowledge of its nature might cause the patient to die of poison, while the knowledge of the nature of a medicine without its application might cause the patient to die of neglect.

And therefore Mill adopted a new system of logic—an inter-related process of *experimentation, speculation, and verification*. This may be called the combined *Inductive-Deductive* system. By means of this system alone—believed Mill—can we hope to demonstrate the old and to discover the new.

### *The Logic of Evolution*

We have traced the development of formal logic from Aristotle to Mill. This logic, whether inductive, or deductive, or a combination of the two, is based upon the assumption of immutable causes and inevitable results. But the Darwinian theory of evolution transformed the world from a still-life painting to a moving picture. In biology, as Darwin showed, there is no such thing as a permanent species. A species is nothing but a temporary grouping of individuals in the continual transition of life from one form to another. So, too, in astronomy, a constellation is but a momentary confluence of stars in the ceaseless evolution of the heavens. Even in chemistry we find that there is no such thing as a fixed number

of stable elements. At least a "good few" of the elements—such, for example, as uranium, the nucleus of the atomic bomb—can now be *de-elementized* into energy and motion.

And even when we break up the elements, when we split their constituent atoms into the pent-up energy of their electrons and their protons, we come to a surprising and apparently illogical freak of nature. The laws of cause and effect no longer seem to hold true. The movement of the electrons is not, like the movement of the atoms, continuous and regular. *There is no predictable order in their behavior.* The electron moves by capricious leaps and bounds, instead of adhering to a recognized principle of motion. "It is as though," writes Professor Whitehead, "an automobile moving at the average rate of thirty miles an hour did not traverse the road continuously, but appeared successively at the successive mile-stones, remaining for two minutes at each."

There is no such thing, it appears, as a principle of necessary consequence in nature. The old science of determinism is a thing of the past. Matter, like mind, would seem to have a characteristic very closely akin to free will. "Perhaps," writes Bertrand Russell, "the electron jumps when it likes. Perhaps the minute phenomena in the brain which make all the difference to mental phenomena belong to the region where physical laws no longer determine definitely what must happen."

We are living today in a world of new discoveries and continual surprises. A world of unceasing motion, everlasting change. Almost every day we find that we must re-adapt ourselves to a new conception of physics, of chemistry, of biology, of mathematics, of truth. And of logic—the means of *ascertaining* the truth. The old *formal* logic is no longer of any use. What we need now is a new *functional* logic—a logic that can adapt our thought to a *changing* instead of a *fixed* world. Logic, writes John Dewey, is in "need of a thoroughgoing reform." The old systems, based upon the belief in a stable world, are "so irrelevant to existing scientific practice as to be the source of confusion and uncertainty." There are no fixed species, no preordained regularities of motion, no absolute determinations of cause and effect. There are only *temporary relationships* in the ever-moving, ever-changing kaleidoscope of life.

*The Quest for the New Logic*

We must seek, in short, a *logic of relativity* in a relative world. Thus far, no such logic has been found. We still base our reasoning upon the outdated world-views of Aristotle, of Bacon, of John Stuart Mill. We use the old roads, and fall into the old ruts, in our quest for the truth, because the new highway has not yet been built.

In the meantime, several groping attempts have been made to *chart* the new way. Herbert Spencer, for example, realized that truth is not absolute but relative. "We too often forget," he wrote, "that not only is there a soul of goodness in things evil, but generally also a soul of truth in things erroneous." What may be false for you may be true for me, and vice versa. Moreover, what was false yesterday may be true today. For, in an evolving world, there are every day new relationships, new measurements for physical facts, new standards for human thoughts. Today's facts show me what to think today. What I shall think tomorrow, I shall know from tomorrow's facts. The way to the truth, therefore, is tentative. It must be constantly checked, corrected, corroborated, *correlated*. Though you and I may disagree, we may both be looking at the truth from different points of view. By combining our views, instead of fighting about them, we may be able to get somewhere. "Truth generally lies in the coördination of antagonistic opinions." Logic, therefore, is humanity's method of reasoning not *against* but *with* one another.

Yes, agreed J. M. Baldwin. To grasp the truth, we must *correlate* it. For the truth does not stand still; it goes marching on. Each of us, at the present moment, can get only an arrested snapshot of a restless panorama. Our new logic must enable us to develop the cinematic type of mind—to photograph the sweeping current of life—to study the world as a flowing stream rather than as a stagnant pool. The trouble with the old logic is that it misses "the dynamic character of development." It regards "the various phases which thought traverses . . . as so many discrete, static unities." The new logic, however, must attempt to treat thought as the living and moving observation of a living and developing reality: Evolution, in other words, has defrosted logic and set it on the go.

This new method of logic-in-motion is aptly called, in the words of Professor Bosanquet, our modern effort at "sustaining the world." For our logic today must aim at the comprehension of the whole rather than at the apprehension of the parts. Bosanquet emphasizes the necessity of a new and "total affirmative attitude to our world as distinct from the isolated judgment or proposition as commonly regarded in (the old systems of) logic." Our old world has come tumbling about our ears. Let us clear away the rubbish and lay the foundations for sustaining—that is, understanding—the new world that is being gradually unveiled through modern science.

This modern science is giving us not only a new world, but new terms—such as *variety, change, many-sided, dynamic, provisional*—with which we may be able to survey it. We've got to "begin anew"—to quote Dewey once more—with a *provisional logic*. That is, a logic that will be honestly satisfied with a *temporary appraisal* of the truth as observed today, with a forward-looking eagerness to the observations and the corrections of tomorrow.

This seems to be the general direction in which modern logic is moving. We find a strong impulse toward this tendency in the philosophy of William James. Logic, said James, is the result of experience; and "experience is the immediate flux of life which furnishes the material to our later reflection." In other words, our reflective mind—to return to our previous metaphor—attempts to transform the disconnected snapshots of our observation into the continuous picture of our reason. Hence logic, thought James, is not a series of factual observations, but a stream of functional correlations. (We find the same idea expressed in our conception of the modern novel as a *stream of consciousness*.)

This idea of logic as a "transitive" stream of correlation is further corroborated in the progressivism of Croce—"logic is philosophy in motion"—and in the vitalism of Bergson—"our intellect is intended to represent the relations of things" as they pass one another in the creative impulsion of life. "Each moment is not only something new, but something unforeseeable . . . Change is far more radical than we suppose." Each of us is not only an instrument of observation, but a "center of action"—an adventurer sailing down the current of life and enriching his experience at every new vision



along the winding course. The new logic, when it comes, will take us out of the classroom into the open air.

### *Logic and Mathematics*

To this general tendency of modern logic there is one important exception—the so-called *Symbolic School* of Professors Boole, Venn, Frege and Russell. These men have tried to develop a “new” logic of mathematics to serve as an anchorage in “the shifting currents” of modern science. The logic of mathematics, however, is not new. It is as old as the Greek philosopher, Pythagoras. As old, and as cold. Bertrand Russell himself admits the impersonal frigidity of mathematical reasoning. “Mathematics, rightly viewed, possesses not only truth but supreme beauty—a beauty cold and austere.” Truth—rigid, dehumanized, and sublime—can be reduced (declared Russell) to a mathematical formula. “The mathematical world”—according to the symbolic philosophers, the *only* world worth knowing—“is unchangeable, exact, delightful to . . . the logician and to all who love perfection more than life.”

Every human decision, declares Russell, “can be effected (like an algebraic problem) by mathematical rules.”

The trouble with this logic is that it applies to a world of abstractions and not of living men. The abstract world of mathematics is unchangeable. The concrete world of humanity keeps changing all the time. A mathematical principle is not only *emotionless* but *motionless*. It can serve beautifully in enumerating the tombstones of a cemetery. It can be of no service whatsoever in understanding the motives of men. The symbolic logician can ridicule—as Russell has done—the human desire to find a warm and friendly and hospitable world. But the symbolic logician cannot find a formula to *explain* this human desire. Mr. Russell likes to talk about “our knowledge of the external world,” just as one would talk about our knowledge of an uninhabited house. But the world is *not* external to us. It is *not* vacant. It is *our* world, the house in which *we* live. Or, rather, since this world of ours is a world in motion, it is *the vehicle in which we travel* on our exciting adventure of life.

And this precisely is the purpose of the new logic toward which

we are groping today. A logic that will enable us to explain the meaning of our constantly changing relationships in the ceaseless progress of life. This quest for a logic of change is implicit even in the "static" principles of the symbolic school. For these principles, or mathematical propositions, are intended to refer "not to things but to their relations." What Mr. Russell wants, it would seem, is a system of never-changing laws that will explain the ever-changing nature of existence. And thus the philosophers of the symbolic school, in spite of their frigid aloofness, are traveling in a direction parallel to that of their fellow seekers in their effort to find the new highway to the truth. And parallel lines, we learn from the new mathematics, are bound to meet in the end.

And the end of the quest, I believe, will result in the addition of a new process to the other three processes as formulated by Aristotle, Locke, and Mill. This four-square method of the new logic, it seems likely, will be based upon *Deduction*, *Induction*, *Coöperation*, and *Evolution*. It will consist of the observation of principles, the investigation of facts, the coördination of the various individual points of view (this method has worked admirably in the development of the atomic bomb), and the correlation of the diversified groupings of events into the coherent pattern of a progressive world in motion.

### *From the Logical to the Psychological*

At the present day, the reasoning faculty of man is in a state of migration. It has discarded the old logic; it has not as yet discovered the new. "Logic is not where it was," writes F. H. Bradley, "and it cannot remain where it is." For almost a century now the human mind has been passing through this transitional process of uncertainty—theorizing, suggesting, rejecting ("it is as important," said Edison, "to find what will *not* work as to discover what *will* work"), sifting, experimenting, and *learning gradually to work together*. If this process seems rather slow, we must remember that it took almost two thousand years for the mind to travel from Aristotle to Francis Bacon, and over two hundred years to advance from Francis Bacon to John Stuart Mill. It is only in small glimpses, and at long intervals, that the mystery of the universe is being re-

vealed to us. Like a patient school-teacher, Nature provides the adolescent mind of man with a problem at a time. And she gives him plenty of time to work upon each problem.

And meanwhile, as we grope our way to the new logic, we can call upon a kindred science—psychology—to help us in our quest. The two sciences are allied, and yet distinct. Psychology *describes* the mind; logic *evaluates* it. Psychology examines *all* thoughts and reasons; logic selects only *those* thoughts which enable us to reason. Psychology aims at knowledge; logic pursues the truth.

Yet the tendency today is to merge the logical into the psychological. Indeed, Professor Schiller suggests that the very name of our new science be changed from *Logic* to *Psychologic*. This change, and the consequent extension of the horizon in the evaluation of human thought, would enable logic to range over “all the sciences which are engaged in discovering truths, and the practices of actual reasoning.” And then for the first time, perhaps, humanity would understand the real meaning of such sciences as *sociology*, the rational study of society; *biology*, the rational examination of life; *theology*, the rational instinct for the divine.

The old dogmatic logic of established beliefs has had its day. It is yielding to the new free logic of progressive knowledge. And the greater freedom of logic is bound to lead to a wider freedom of thought.

This process of free thinking and progressive reasoning—a process which is already at work in the everyday solution of our personal as well as our social problems—reacts upon our minds as a perpetual and sublime irritation. It keeps us restless, discontented, skeptical, and alert.

And it is a healthy sign of the times. For inspiration springs out of discontentment, and wisdom grows out of doubt. It is the spirit of dissatisfied curiosity that makes philosophers of us all. Anyone, as Mill reminds us, would rather be a dissatisfied Socrates than a satisfied fool.

### III

## The Philosophy of Human Progress — History

### *What Is History?*

**A**NATOLE FRANCE tells an interesting story to illustrate his conception of history. "When the young Prince Zemire succeeded to the throne of Persia, he commanded the most learned men of his country to appear before him; and when they had gathered together, he said to them:

"I have learned from my great teacher, Dr. Zeb, that a king would commit fewer errors if he could be enlightened by the example of the past. For that reason I am anxious to study the annals of all the nations. I therefore command you to write for me a complete history of mankind, and to omit not a single fact of importance from this history."

"The learned men of Persia promised to do as their young king desired; and having left him, they immediately set to work. At the end of twenty years they returned to the king, followed by a caravan of twelve camels, each of these camels carrying five hundred volumes. The Secretary of the Academy, having prostrated himself upon the steps of the throne, spoke as follows:

"Sire, the learned men of your kingdom have the honor to place at your feet the history of mankind, which they have prepared in accordance with your commands. This work comprises six thousand volumes, from which we have tried to omit nothing that has to do with the manners of people and the vicissitudes of empires. In this history we have inserted all the ancient myths which have

been preserved, and we have illustrated them with explanatory notes dealing with the geography, chronology and diplomacy of the various nations. The preface itself is the burden of a whole camel, and the notes on this preface are almost more than the entire load of another.'

"The king replied:

"Gentlemen, I thank you for your trouble. But just at present I am too busy with the cares of my country. Besides, I have grown old while you were at work. I have now reached, as the Persian poet says, the middle of life's journey. Assuming even that I should die rich in years, I could never hope to find the time to read all this long history. I will have it filed in the archives of the kingdom, and I will ask you to write me an abridged history—one that will be more in keeping with the brevity of human existence.'

"The learned men of Persia went to work for another twenty years, at the end of which time they came back to the king with three camels bearing fifteen hundred volumes.

"Sire,' said the Secretary in a feeble voice, 'here is our new work. We hope we have not omitted anything of importance.'

"You may be right,' replied the king. 'But I have no time to read it. I am too old to undertake so great a task. Therefore abridge your work still further, and lose no time about it.'

"The learned men worked so rapidly that at the end of ten years they returned, this time with one young elephant carrying five hundred volumes.

"We are proud to have completed the work in so brief a time, Sire,' said the Secretary.

"You have not been brief enough,' replied the king. 'I have almost reached the end of my life. Therefore hasten and abridge the work still further, if you want me to learn the history of mankind before I die!'

"This time the Secretary returned to the palace at the end of five years. He walked upon crutches and led by the reins a little donkey that carried a large book on its back.

"Hasten, O Secretary,' cried one of the king's officers. 'Our emperor is dying.'

"It was true. The king lay upon his death bed. He looked at the Secretary with his large book and the light in his eyes grew dim-

mer. And he said moaning: 'I shall die before I can learn the history of mankind.'

"Sire," replied the Secretary, who like the king was himself at death's door, 'I can tell you the entire history of the world in seven words: *Men are born, they suffer, they die.*'

"And this is the way in which the king of Persia, rather late in life, learned the history of mankind."

According to Anatole France, history is the record of human suffering. According to Bernard Shaw, it is the transcript of human stupidity. To Voltaire, it is a chronicle of injustices, misfortunes and crimes. "We have only histories of persecution and war; we have no histories of tranquillity and peace." And to Rousseau history is "the art of choosing, from among many lies, that one which most resembles the truth."

All the above definitions, however, are more facetious than factual. History, said Buckle, proves neither the vices nor the virtues, neither the sadness nor the happiness of mankind. It is merely a demonstration of the influence of geography upon human character. Not only do the location and the climate of a country determine the nature of its inhabitants, but the inhabitants are instinctively seeking to amplify their nature by changing their environment. Thus, the majestic scenery of India inclined the Hindus to religious adoration, while the commonplace scenery of most of the European countries led their inhabitants to material exploitation. You worship a mountain, but you harness a river and turn it into a commercial highway.

Moreover, said Buckle, the history of mankind is largely an attempt for the land-locked nations to find an outlet to the sea. Most of the great wars of the past—and, were he alive today, he would have added the two great wars of the twentieth century—were the outcome of the human effort for expansion toward ports of embarkation and toward islands that could be used as stepping stones for refueling and trading and further expansion.

And therefore, agreed many—altogether too many—historians, let us turn our histories into glorifications of battles and warriors and kings. For these alone count; nothing else is important. The prevailing fashion in history for almost twenty-five centuries was to

magnify the virtues and the victories and to minimize the vanities and the vices of the "great expansionists"—the aggressors and the exploiters and the tyrants of the world. This tendency was finally carried to such a pass that the school children were compelled to swallow their history in doses of kings and conquests and dates. "And Xerxes led his hosts across the Hellespont . . . And the Peloponnesian War lasted from 431 to 404 B.C. . . . And Alexander invaded Persia . . . And Caesar beheaded Vercingetorix . . . And the Second Punic War ended with the Battle of Zama . . ." And so on and on, ad nauseam.

This evaluation of history as a chronicle of royal births and battles led to the pronouncement of Carlyle that history is the biography of great men. "Universal history," he said, "is at bottom the history of the great men who have worked here. They are the leaders of men, these great ones; the modelers, patterns, and in a wide sense creators, of whatsoever the general mass of men contrived to do or to attain; all things that we see standing accomplished in the world are properly the outer material result, the practical realization and embodiment of thoughts that dwelt in the great men sent into the world."

The masses of mankind, in other words, are of no consequence. The masters alone are the backbone of history. Yet Carlyle has advanced beyond the mere worshipers of warriors and chroniclers of kings. For he measures greatness not by birth, but by endowment. Moreover, he includes among his great men not only the princes but the prophets, not only the leaders who conquer and kill, but also the teachers who enlighten and inspire. Yet the only important lesson of history, maintained Carlyle, is the supremacy of the hero and the necessity of hero-worship.

This aristocratic conception of history enticed many a philosopher, including even the democratically-minded Emerson. "Nature," he said, "seems to exist for the excellent." But, like Carlyle, he defined excellence in spiritual rather than in material terms. "The true artist has the planet for his pedestal; the adventurer . . . has nothing broader than his own shoes."

In his distinction between *progressive* and *aggressive* greatness, Emerson went far beyond Carlyle to align himself on the side of the gods. Both Carlyle and Emerson took Napoleon as the symbol of

military greatness. But Carlyle looked *up* to Napoleon, while Emerson looked *down* upon him. "The commander over men," said Carlyle, "may be reckoned the most important of great men." And Napoleon, he declared, was "our last great man." While he recognized Napoleon's shortcomings, Carlyle prostrated himself before his virtues. He emphasized Napoleon's reverence toward "God who created men"; but he overlooked Napoleon's *irreverence* by *destroying* God's creation. He spoke of Napoleon's *sincerity*, his *faith*, his *silent strength* in the middle of his *querulous followers*. "There was an eye to see . . . a soul to dare and do . . . in this . . . greatest of all men that had been in the world for some ages."

Emerson, on the other hand, while he recognized the merits of Napoleon, was much more aware of his faults. Far from being a man of silence, the "Little Corporal" appears in Emerson's biography as a vainglorious blusterer. "I must dazzle and astonish," Emerson quotes him as saying. "A great reputation is a great noise . . . Laws, institutions, monuments, nations, all fall; but the noise continues, and resounds in after ages." In Emerson's Napoleon we see a man not of sincerity or faith, but of unscrupulous cynicism and deceit. "Love is a silly infatuation; friendship, but a name . . . I love nobody, not even my brother." Napoleon, said Emerson, was ready to steal, slander, assassinate, drown and poison, as his interest dictated.

As Emerson saw it, therefore, history is not a medium for hero-worship, but an instrument for distinguishing the true heroes from the false. Also, it is a warning against the men of blatant insolence and a voucher for the men of silent devotion. Among those whom Emerson selects as the most worthy of our admiration are Buddha, Plato, Swedenborg, Montaigne, Shakespeare, Goethe—prophets, philosophers, mystics, teachers, poets, seers—men of vision, understanding, loyalty and thought. Yet Emerson's conception of history, like Carlyle's, was a still-life picture of individuals rather than a moving panorama of masses of men.

Closely allied with the *individual* conception of history is the *racial* or the *national* conception. This theory has led to a great deal of prejudice and misunderstanding and hatred and strife. For it is based upon the unwarranted assumption that Nature has selected a handful of people as her creation and rejected all the rest of man-



kind as her spawn. In the pre-Christian days, every group regarded every other group as barbarian. Submerged for a time by the internationalism of Christianity, the vicious doctrine came to the surface again in the nineteenth century. In his book, *The Inequality of the Races of Man*, Count Gobineau declared that all the *noble* human characteristics spring from the Teutonic race, and all the *ignoble* characteristics from the other races. His disciples, with an arrogance born of ignorance, proceeded to "prove" that every great genius had a strain of Teutonic blood. "Dante's face is German; Saint Paul's style is German; even Christ's Gospel is German."

And thus the advocates of the superior race doctrine distorted the facts to fit their theory, instead of correcting their theory to fit the facts. The "favored" race came to be known under different names—Teutonic, Germanic, Nordic, Aryan—but the idea was always and viciously the same. "It is the purpose of history to show that there is one master race, and that all the other races must submit to it as its slaves."

All this racial theorizing, object the historians of another school, is not only vicious but nonsensical. There is no such thing as a *superior* race, or even a *pure* race. Every race and every nation is a mixture of many elements that have come together from many parts of the world and have intermarried again and again in the course of many generations. History is not the exclusive story of individual nations, or of individual men. It is *the story of mankind*—the record not only of the great folk but of the "little people." What we need, declare the historians of this school, is a *social* history of the world—a record of the slow and difficult and courageous struggle of the masses against the masters. To understand mankind, we need to become acquainted not with the *uncommon* but with the *common* people. We shall get a much better idea of the past, and therefore of the present, if we are taken into the average home of the average family in every country and at every age. For in this way we shall get a picture not only of human activities but of the human heart. Let our histories stop glorifying the art of war and concentrate upon the arts of peace. Let them turn away from the ambitions of the leaders and the bickerings of the nations. Let them for a while disregard the *noisier* moments and pay attention to the *quieter* periods of human existence. Let them forget the

heroics of the great names and look upon the heroism of the nameless crowd.

But this, too, is a one-sided view of history. The stream of human existence carries all sorts of traffic, big as well as small. The function of the historian is to observe and to evaluate *all* of the traffic, not merely a *part* of it. And so there arose a new school of historians, beginning with Turgot. This school worked on the theory that only a philosopher has a right to be a historian. For the philosopher "sees life steadily and sees it whole." As reviewed through the eye of the philosopher, history is the record of man's material, intellectual and ethical progress—the spectacle of his emergence from savagery into barbarism, and from barbarism into the first glimmering light of civilization. In the historian's presentation of this spectacle, the kings and the battles must have their day, the great men their due respect, and the little people their right to be heard. Human history, in short, must be shown to be co-extensive with human life.

Yes, agrees Croce, the philosopher observes history—as all of us *should* observe it—from a reviewing stand. For history is "philosophy in motion"—a pageant not only of human deeds but of human ideas. He must note every possible phase of the pageant, the bad as well as the good, in order that he may instruct his generation how to improve their own part in the pageant for the better instruction of the coming generations. For history is a re-vision of the past for the enlightenment of the future. The reason why we so consistently repeat our past stupidities and errors and crimes is that our historians have improperly observed them and inadequately interpreted them. The historians give too little time to their task, and the world produces too few historians. For, to write the history even of one period, it requires the lifetime study of several observers who must examine the different aspects of that period from their different points of view.

And the summary of their examinations—this is the *universal* view of history as advanced by Spinoza, Bergson, and Bossuet—would point to one conclusive truth: *History is the Drama of Providence enacted against the backdrop of eternity.* The plot is rational, inevitable, and complete. Nothing happens by chance. Every act, every line, every life is a necessary part of an integrated whole.

Every written history is a condensation of the drama, and the history is as valuable as the condensation is accurate. But accuracy alone is not enough. The adequate history must be not only faithful to, but representative of, the spirit of the original. To understand the entire spirit, we must get the entire view. When we read a history of kings, or of battles, or of individual ambitions of countries or races or men, we are like prisoners chained in a cell looking out upon the world through a narrow window. We see but a little part of the landscape, and we get no clear idea of the fusion of this little picture into the landscape of the universe. It is the final purpose of history to give us a complete story of the universe. And this is nothing less than a complete philosophy of life.

## *The Bible as History*

Interestingly enough, the first recorded history of the world—*The Old Testament*—is an attempt at the complete story of the universe. It is a book not only of abstract theology but of practical philosophy. The authors of the Bible tried to show the safest way to salvation by pointing out the obstacles that threatened to lead to perdition. They painted no haloes around their heroes, but depicted their vices as well as their virtues with an impartial hand. Referring to the author of the Biblical section dealing with the history of David, Professor A. T. Olmstead writes: "The modern professional historian must do justice to his predecessor of three thousand years ago. He has presented us with a genuine history . . . Here are no inspired annals of a monarch's wars, no brief dry chronicle or folk tale of past heroes . . . but a . . . history which would suffer little in essentials if compared with present day (histories). Our historian has been behind the scenes, he writes simply yet vividly, not propaganda . . . but an account of the facts for (the guidance of the) coming generations."

Yet the Bible, though it is history in the truest sense, is a book apart. The first writer who served as a model for the so-called "professional" historians of the world was "Father Herodotus."

*Herodotus—the "Father of History"*

This genial gossip of Halicarnassus (a Greek colony of Asia Minor) had that magical touch which transformed the dead past into a living present. Led by an insatiable curiosity, he stuck his nose into everybody's business, traveled all over Asia and Europe, pried into the secret chambers of "the world and his wife," and came back with a prose epic that has been the envy of historians ever since.

The immediate theme of his history was the struggle between the Greeks and the Persians; but its ultimate scope was the religious and the economic and the social and the political and especially the domestic life of mankind. His tolerance toward people "on the other side of the fence" impelled his countrymen to suspect his patriotism. And his fondness for seasoning his narrative with savory anecdotes prompted his critics to question his scholarship. But his patriotism and his scholarship have been completely vindicated; and he stands forth today as "the first constructive artist"—I am quoting Professor Harry Elmer Barnes—"in the field of historical writing." He wanted above all things to bring home a philosophical truism—that the way of the aggressor is the way of death. "Be not over-arrogant, O little man, for the vengeance of the gods is waiting to trip thee up." Again and again Herodotus emphasizes this lesson—a lesson which it has taken two great wars in our own generation (and may take heaven knows how many wars in the future) to re-emphasize.

Yet Herodotus is never the preacher; he is always the storyteller. And what a profusion of stories! Tales of cities "which once were great but now are mean"; of countries "which once were small but now are mighty"; for "the wheel of fortune keeps always turning, and none so proud but will someday bite the dust." Of the community of wives among the Agathyrsi, designed to turn all the husbands of the tribe into "a harmonious brotherhood." Of Sappho, who ridiculed her brother for loving a courtesan and who then killed herself out of love for a sailor. Of the Persian soldier who, although he saw with prophetic eye that his commander was riding to defeat, was yet helpless to do or to say anything about it. "Our

eyes are open; but, constrained by necessity, we follow on. And this pang is bitterest of all—for men to have knowledge of everything and power over nothing.” Of the tyrant who was enslaved to his own evil heart and who experienced every joy save the one he desired most of all—freedom. Of the widow of Argos who, unable to secure oxen, harnessed her two sons to her cart in order that she might be present at the goddess Juno’s festival five miles away. When the Argive women congratulated her on being the mother of such devoted children, “she stood before the statue of Juno and prayed that the goddess would reward them with whatever gift is best for man to have. And the goddess answered her prayer. The two sons, having sacrificed and feasted, lay down to sleep in the temple and never woke up again.”

These and a thousand other tales, many of them racy but all of them barbed with wisdom, place the history of Herodotus among the most readable of all books. And among the most comprehensive. For the lighter moments of the human drama are no less historical than the darker; and the historians who describe the past as a mausoleum of tombstones forget the one important fact—that history is a transcript of *life*.

### *History and Greek Patriotism—Thucydides*

The story is told that Thucydides, as a child, was present when Herodotus gave a public reading of his history. Thucydides was so excited by the experience that he burst into tears. “*That’s* the sort of thing I would like to write when I grow up!”

Yet, as a historian, Thucydides turned out to be the direct opposite of Herodotus. Where Herodotus had tried to *entertain*, Thucydides merely wanted to *instruct*. Herodotus wrote for the many; Thucydides, for the few.

And of the few. The interests of Herodotus were world-wide; the sympathies of Thucydides, city-wide. It was his purpose as a historian, he said, to demonstrate that “our city (of Athens) has the greatest name among all men because she never yields to her misfortunes. And even should we ever be compelled to yield a little—for it is nature’s way that all things bloom to suffer loss—there will

abide a memory that we made our dwelling-place to be a city dowered with all things, and the mightiest of all."

And even within the city he was concerned only with the important people. "These alone count." History is but a stage for the activities of famous men—the famous men of Athens. "Not only their illustrious tomb . . . but the whole earth is their sepulcher."

Athens was the city of great men, splendid buildings, and noble thoughts. All other cities were but trimmings to the glory of Athens. In his history of the war between the Athenians and the Spartans, he belittled Sparta—although she won the war—as a "straggling and rather insignificant village" whose fame was "far greater than her virtue." Herodotus, who had been able to see beyond the horizon of his own little house and garden, had called the Spartans "the bravest fighters of them all." But Thucydides, who was first, last and always an Athenian, compared his countrymen to the Spartans in the following terms: "They (the Athenians) are daring *beyond* their strength . . . whereas you (the Spartans) act only *within* your strength . . . They are energetic and you are laggards; they go abroad while you cling to your home."

But in his philosophical vision, Thucydides did precisely the thing for which he blamed the Spartans—he clung to his own home. His history is one of the most penetrating studies of a single community. But he had no conception of the larger community of the world. "There are few evils within the city," he said, "that can not be averted by intelligence." But he failed to apply this intelligence to the intercity quarrels that kept the cities fighting one against the other. The war between Athens and Sparta was the result of the commercial rivalry between the reactionary business men of both countries. But Thucydides never even mentioned this fact. To him the war was a struggle between darkness (as personified by the other fellow) and light (as revealed by himself). Thucydides had an eloquent style but a limited scope. Today he is a literary curiosity rather than a philosophical guide.

### *History and Roman Aggression—Livy*

Livy went even beyond Thucydides in his employment of history as an instrument of propaganda for his own country. In his "prose

epic of the Roman world-state" he aimed first of all at the glorification of Italy. His secondary purpose was a perfection of style. The last and the least of his objectives was an honest presentation of the facts. The result is a historical fairy tale interesting to read but difficult to believe. Rome is a Prince Charming destined by the gods to slay and to devour the dragon represented by the rest of the world.

Livy wrote frankly to tickle the vanity of the Romans and to manufacture a "historic justification" for their passion to conquer the world. Our human affairs, he said, are divinely guided—for the Romans to command, for the other countries to obey. In order to prove this "divine destiny" of Rome, he accepted all sorts of fabulous data and presented them as authentic facts. This may not be good history, "but it makes a diverting story and serves as a patriotic stimulus to action." *Fighting* action. It was the purpose of Livy to perpetuate his Romans as the champion aggressors of the ancient world. He was the unspiritual forefather of the so-called "nationalistic" historians—Johannes Müller, Heinrich von Treitschke, Adolph Schmidt, Schäfer, von Sybel and Bernhardt—men who believed in national expansion through international murder. All of them drew their inspiration at the poisoned fountain of what may be called the "pro-Roman and anti-human" method of history.

### *The Early Christian View of History*

The nationalism of Rome gave way to the internationalism of the church. Livy's city of emperors faded out under the light of Augustine's City of God. And, as the spiritual horizon of mankind became more extended, the spirit of the individual man assumed a greater dignity. Every one, however lowly, felt that God took a personal interest in him—directing his hopes and listening to his prayers. With a simplicity as beautiful as it was naïve, every man felt that he had an equal vote—sometimes even a *deciding* vote—in the course not only of human but of divine affairs. "It is our deeds and our misdeeds that determine the falling of the rain, the fury of the tempest and the misfortunes of the world." There is an interesting legend told about the pious Saint Ethelred who, "returning from a pilgrimage to Citeaux in the days of Henry II, encountered a great storm when he reached the Channel." He asked

himself what he had done to be thus delayed, and suddenly recalled that he had failed to fulfil a promise he had made to write a poem on Saint Cuthbert. Whereupon he sat down and wrote the poem—and “wonderful to relate, the sea ceased to rage and became tranquil.”

The early Christian, in spite of his ignorance and his poverty, felt himself unimaginably wise and rich. For he was a worthy citizen not only of the visible but of the invisible world. The philosophers of that period regarded history as the great cosmic elaboration of God's plan through the actions of man. “The Christians,” writes Professor James Harvey Robinson, “were perhaps the first to suspect a real grandeur in history; for to them it became a divine epic, stretching far back to the creation of man and forward to the final separation of good and evil in a last magnificent and decisive crisis.” History, beginning with the creation, and linking heaven and earth with its Jacob's ladder, was—to the early Christians—the story of man's original relationship with God, his fall from grace through the sin of Adam, and his slow and painful climb back toward the gracious forgiveness of God.

This history, elaborated in the works of Eusebius and of Isidore of Seville, was universal to be sure. But it was a narrow kind of universality that it painted. For it paid attention only to the Judeo-Christian members of the human family. All the others—the Greeks, the Romans, the Persians, the Egyptians, the Macedonians, the Gauls—were accidental trash that God didn't care anything about. Unless, of course, they became Christians. From Christianity, wrote the church historian, Orosius, “spring all the virtues.” But from Paganism come all the “most signal horrors of pestilence and famine and war . . . and earthquakes and floods and eruptions and lightning and hail . . . and all the awful misery due to crime.”

And thus the historians, like the rest of the human race, were trying, step by painful step, to emerge out of the darkness into the light of a better understanding and a more tolerant point of view. Very little progress had been made up to the time of Orosius. But two definite ideas had begun to emerge: first, the human instinct for breaking down fences between individuals and groups—after all, a *Christianized* world was a sincere attempt at *one* world; and second, the human intuition that war is a monstrous thing. It was



Orosius who first recognized the fact that the wars of the Pagans, though they might have been a thrilling game for the nobles who profited by them, were a ghastly crime to the common folk who fought and died in them.

### *History and the Middle Ages*

The historians of the Middle Ages departed, as a general rule, from the internationalism of the early Christians. Their histories dwelt with individual countries—England, Ireland, Germany, France—or with individual events, such as Wat Tyler's rebellion, or the Gothic conquests. Medieval history, like medieval literature, was like a stagnant pool rather than a flowing stream. The destruction of the Roman Empire had thrown the entire world into a catalepsy of suspended animation. The intellectual treasures of the ancient Greeks had been burned or buried in the confusion of the fighting. Learning had become sterile, travel difficult, thought provincial.

Moreover, the historians of the Middle Ages, compelled to live within the limits of their local interests, had fallen prey to an ingrowing mentality. And to a personal ambition to shine within their own little circle. And so they extolled the virtues and forgot the vices of their own country, their own patron, their own class.

Yet there were some historians, even at that period, who retained their sense of balance between the parts and the whole. Thus the Englishman, Roger of Wendover, surveyed the world in a book entitled *Flowers of History*—a sort of aristocratic prelude to Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*. And Matthew Paris, regarded as the ablest historian of medieval England, wrote a fearless analysis of his country's politics as it impinged upon the politics of the world. He dared to call a spade a spade—even if it happened to be the *king* of spades. Another Englishman, Ralph Higden, concerned himself not only with the *political* but with the *geographical* importance of history. This was perhaps the most significant history produced up to that period.

In France, as in England, a number of historians forgot their own little importance sufficiently to consider the larger importance of mankind. The Dominican friar, Vincent of Beauvais, spent a life-

time in compiling a "mirror of the human pageant" that ran to 31 books and about 4000 chapters. It covered all history from the Creation to the Crusades. Another medieval Frenchman, Jean de Venette, was the first to advance the democratic idea that there should be no taxation without representation.

It remained for a German, however, to write the first medieval philosophy of History. Bishop Otto of Freising, uncle of the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa, defined history (after the manner of Saint Augustine) as the eternal struggle between the City of the Devil and the City of God. In this struggle, he said, we can best understand the present through a better understanding of the past. For history is not a meaningless jumble, but a patterned sequence of cause and effect. This was a new note. The human mind was beginning to unravel the tangled skein of existence—

To find a reason and a plan  
Devised by God for the good of man.

More important even than the Christian Otto was the Moham-  
medan Ibn Khaldun. It was he who established history as a science and who considered the body of mankind, like the body of the individual man, as a living and growing organism. In his *Preface to History* he traced the interaction between the physical environment and the spiritual development of the human race. And he emphasized the unity and the continuity of human life. His history, unlike most of the other histories of the Middle Ages, was dynamic instead of static. He brought the various isolated pools back into the general current. He was universally minded. And socially minded. He anticipated Karl Marx in his economic conception of history. The life of a country, he said, depends upon the manner in which the inhabitants make their living. And the life of the whole depends upon the living coöperation of the parts.

### *History and Humanism*

In spite of its occasional moments of wakefulness, the medieval world was like a man asleep. It was conscious of its activities as a man is conscious of his dreams. It was a vague and illogical sort of consciousness—emphasizing the unimportant, slurring over the im-

portant, and never suspecting for a moment (as a man never suspects in his dreams) that there was anything unusual or irrational in this fantastic coördination of incoherent events.

And then came the *Renaissance*. The world awoke and shook the sleep out of its system. It suddenly remembered the past as a reality, not as a dream. It began to recall the events of the day before it had fallen asleep, and of all the preceding days. Ancient manuscripts were unearthed, ancient ideas rediscovered, ancient stories retold, ancient hopes renewed. The whole civilization of the past was brought back to life. The *Renaissance*—the rebirth, or rather the reawakening, of the intellect—became imbued with the spirit of humanism, the consciousness of human comradeship throughout the world. Pagans, Moslems, Christians, Jews—all alike now had come within the horizon of a man's interests. Through the translation of manuscripts, the extension of commerce, and the travels of men like Marco Polo, the human family had become expanded to include Homer and Plato and Confucius along with Moses and Isaiah and Mohammed and Saint Paul.

And this widening of the horizon from the Hebrew or the Christian or the Mohammedan world to the *human world* was reflected in the humanization of history. For a thousand years it had been the custom to begin history with the Hebrews and to intersperse it with the miraculous intervention of heaven in the affairs of the earth. But the humanist Marcantonio Coccio—better known as Sabellicus—put an end to all that. He included in his history the "secular" as well as the "sacred" nations, and he substituted morals in place of miracles as the springboard for human advancement. He treated the Bible like any other historical record, trying to differentiate between "fact and fable." And he removed the Hebrew heroes as well as the Greek demigods from the clouds, and placed them upon human pedestals. The result is a history which for the first time emphasizes not only the Christian beauty of holiness but the Pagan holiness of beauty. "It was not until the age of Voltaire," writes Professor Barnes, "that world history was again viewed as brilliantly and understandingly."

One of the chief functions of the humanistic historians was to deflate the present in its relation to the past. Most of the medieval scholars failed to see the forest of humanity because of the exag-

gerated shadows cast by the trees that immediately surrounded them. "God made the world, and the world was made for me." But the humanists saw beyond themselves. They were not overcome by their "modernity" as opposed to the "antiquity" of the Greeks and the Romans. This historical perspective is admirably expressed in Francis Bacon's assertion that "the ancients are not the old Pagans but we ourselves . . . These be the ancient times, when the world is growing old."

The world at that time was not growing old—Francis Bacon was exaggerating—but it was definitely growing toward maturity. The historians, like the philosophers, like Francis Bacon himself, were gradually learning to see the world steadily and to see it whole.

### *History as a Family Quarrel*

But the vision was temporarily blurred by a family quarrel within the church. The Protestant children departed from the fireside of their Catholic parents. And the historians, instead of seeing a united mankind, began to talk of divisions and disharmonies, and of white sheep on the one side of the fence and of black sheep on the other side. The followers of Luther referred to the Catholics as the "dwellers within the Devil's nest at Rome." And the adherents of the Pope alluded to the Protestants as the "lackeys of the crazy Monk of Wittenberg." The past had now become not a record for information but an arsenal for ammunition. Each side came to the study of mankind with a view to picking out of its "storehouse of firearms" such weapons as would put the other side to flight. The philosophy of history was degenerating into a partisan squabble of recrimination and reprisal.

Yet always in the midst of confusion there was the healthy instinct of the few to search for the unpartisan truth. These men held strictly to their purpose—to investigate the "totality of civilization." The conception of this "totality" became widely extended through the discovery of America. New lands, new peoples, new customs, new members of the human family. But always the unity of the self-same human hope in all places and at all times. What was the meaning of this hope?

And the historians set to work, like Brother Juniper in the *Bridge*

of *San Luis Rey*, to discover the meaning. One of the most important books dealing with the impact of the American races upon the history of the human race was Joseph François Lafiteau's *Customs of the American Savages compared with the Customs of Early Times*. In this book with its imposing title the author, a French Jesuit missionary, reiterated the simple truth that when the quarreling members of the human family get to know one another, they merge their quarrels in a sympathetic understanding of their common destiny.

### *History and the Age of Reason*

Following upon a wider acquaintance with the earth came a more extended knowledge of the heavens. The "trackless expanses" of the universe were explored by Copernicus, Galileo, Tycho Brahe, and Giordano Bruno. The paths between the constellations were laid down and partially measured by Kepler, Halley, and Newton. And the eternal law that held them together was formulated by Spinoza. The historians began to re-examine their old ideas in the light of their new experience. The plot of the human drama appeared now as a rational pattern rather than as a theological caprice. The earlier historians had regarded God as an arbitrary ruler whose mind could be swayed to suspend the laws of the universe in order to punish a blasphemy or to answer a prayer. But the rationalistic historians of the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries, while still adhering to their belief in God, rejected the idea of His capriciousness but accepted Him as the Creator and the Guide of a continuous and progressive social process in our human existence. History became the elaboration of a scientific formula and the interpretation of a naturalistic law. *The law of humanity as an inter-related unit.*

The idea of this united inter-relationship not only of humanity but of the entire universe is beautifully expressed in the words of Descartes: "Those long chains of simple and easy conclusions used by the geometers for obtaining their most difficult proofs made me think that everything within the ken of man is interlaced in this same manner, and that . . . there can be nothing so remote that it will not finally be reached nor so hidden that it will not be discovered." These words marked the beginning of a new age in the

writing of history. The Age of Reason. There is an orderly development, said the historians of this age, in the natural motion of the universe and in the moral striving of man. And this development is *forward and upward*. Man has not fallen from perfection; he is rising toward it. He is not, as many of the medieval historians and theologians had declared, a depraved and unreasoning animal; he is inherently decent and rational and humane. A host of historians and philosophers arose to champion this new doctrine—Hume, Turgot, Fontenelle, Condorcet, Godwin, Vico, Montesquieu and Kant. While they differed in many respects, they were agreed on one point: History was to be regarded no longer as a story of isolated miracles or of individual movements or men. It must henceforth be recognized as the integrated migration of mankind toward the Promised Land. Every part, however separated in time and place, and however antagonistic in the limited view of our prejudices and preconceptions, is intimately connected with every other part. It is no mere figure of speech to talk about the *stream of history*. For history is in the truest sense an ingathering of many rivulets of races, nations, customs, governments, religions, industries, ideas and wills into a single living current of progressive hope. "The human mind is essentially the same the world over." The human drama has but a single moral aim—the recognition that you and I must live not *against* but *with* and *for* one another.

### *History is the Story of Mankind—Voltaire*

"Only a philosopher," said Voltaire, "should write history." For history is "philosophy teaching by experience." Putting his theory into practice, Voltaire prepared himself as a historian through the study of philosophy—that is, "the examination of life in its totality." And then he further schooled himself for his final history through the painting of a few individual periods against a universal background. He started these periodic histories with a book entitled *The Age of Louis XIV*—"the first human chronicle written in the modern spirit." This book was a protest against the prevailing notion of history as a "chronological compilation" of names and dates. "What does it matter to me to know that Egil succeeded Haquin in Sweden, or that Ottoman was the son of Ortogrul? . . . I have

never yet been able to finish any long history of our modern nations. I can see scarcely anything in them but confusion; a host of minute events without connection or sequence, a thousand battles which settled nothing. I renounce a study which overwhelms the mind without illuminating it."

And he proceeded to "illuminate the mind without overwhelming it" in a series of other periodic histories—on Russia, on Charles XII, on Louis XIII—seeking always the *unifying principle* that underlay the multiplicity of human activities and ambitions.

And then he was ready for his great historical synthesis—the *Essay on the Morals and the Spirit of the Nations*. "The underlying principle of history is the progress of the human intellect." The individual is no longer a provincial; he is no longer a European or an Asiatic or an American; no longer a sectarian—a Christian or a Buddhist or a Mohammedan or an Atheist or a Jew; no longer a king or an aristocrat or a workingman or a slave. *He is a member of the human brotherhood*. And the process of all history is to bring this relationship home to every one of us.

In order to prove this point, he surveyed not only the civilizations of antiquity—both in Asia and in Europe—but the recently discovered civilizations of America. "My object is a history not of wars but of society . . . I want to ascertain how men lived in the interior of their families"—and, he might have added, in the innermost recesses of their minds—"and what were the arts which they commonly cultivated . . . I am not concerned with the story of the great lords, but I am anxious to know what were the steps by which men tried to rise from savagery into sanity."

And so he wrote his book and received his reward—exile. The world, it seemed, was not as yet ready for sanity. "You cannot abolish your King, but your King can destroy your freedom."

"This may well be," retorted Voltaire. "I have no scepter, but I have a pen."

And he proceeded to wield his pen and to demonstrate the inevitable march of history. And the French kings were abolished. And other historians, taking their inspiration from Voltaire, continued to show the irresistible progress of the human spirit and the human mind.

*The Human March to Freedom*

"History is the story of man's progressive march to freedom." This march is represented by historians like Vico and Michelet as a *spiral of progress*. Humanity advances neither in a straight line nor in a circle, but as it were upward around a mountain. In this spiral cycle of development, there is never any turning back to the original starting point, but every step and every turn is higher than the preceding. Thus history never repeats itself; what seems to us a repetition is merely a re-view of an old landscape from a loftier position that enables us to look into wider horizons. The principal positions that have marked the advance of humanity are, according to Vico, three in number. The first, represented by antiquity, is characterized by the supremacy of the emotions in the realm of the spirit and by the dominance of theocracy in the field of politics. The second, covering the period of the epic poets, is marked by the preponderance of the imagination in the collective mentality and by the prevalence of aristocracy in politics. The third, beginning with the scientific era, is typified by the pursuit of positive knowledge in the collective mentality and by the emergence of the democratic principle in government. And we are going still higher, and with every cyclical turn our horizon will become wider, our sympathies more inclusive, our hearts more friendly and our contacts more free.

This idea receives further elaboration in Herder's *Philosophy of the History of Mankind*. In its upward march toward a clearer vision, human nature is instinctively aiming at the unification of the human race. To further this aim, God has put our destiny into our own hands. Slowly we are learning to construct and destroy, destroy and construct. But our power for building is greater than our power for tearing down. In the imperfect blundering of the parts we are moving toward the ultimate perfection of the whole.

And the refining process in this advance toward perfection is our ever-growing intelligence in the application of justice. For the human mind is endowed with a desire and a capacity for moral education. And the constant and instinctive aim of this education is to arrive at the understanding of one world, one destiny, one compati-



ble kinship under heaven, one beneficent Providence over all. This united destiny of ours, declared Herder, is in the hands of an all-wise and all-merciful Architect. And therefore there can be no greater merit, no purer happiness, than to coöperate in His designs.

History is thus based upon natural laws that operate in accordance with a divine plan.

### *History and Nationalism—Hegel*

Herder's idea, said Hegel, is only partially correct. History is indeed based upon natural laws. But these laws, declared Hegel with Teutonic arrogance, prove not the equality of all persons but the superiority of all Prussians. The Prussian spirit of self-adulation had been stimulated, before Hegel, by Fichte, "the golden-mouthed spokesman of nationality"—I am quoting Professor Robinson—"who was summoned from his philosophic speculations to celebrate the glories of *Deutschthum*." The Germans, said Fichte, basing his argument entirely upon the unscholarly basis of his imagination, were an *Urfolk* or unmixed race, whereas all the other nations were a *Mischvolk* or a product of race mixture. (The German philosophers had a genius for giving concrete fancy names to fanciful abstract ideas.) "The rest of the world, therefore, is on the high road to decadence; but the Germans alone are carrying aloft the torch of civilization."

Hegel took hold of this "torch" and inflamed the Prussians with a fury for world domination. The spiritual light of history, said Hegel, travels like the physical light of the sun—from east to west. Asia is "the determinate east," or absolute beginning of history; and Germany is "the determinate west," or absolute goal of history. The great epochs of history—here Hegel follows Vico, but follows him only a little way—are three in number—the Oriental, the Graeco-Roman, and the German. In the first epoch, the spirit is asleep and unconscious of its essential urge to freedom. It therefore submits patiently to civil and spiritual despotism, so that only the *king* is free. In the second epoch, the spirit is only half awake to its instinctive hunger for freedom. And thus, *some* men but not *all* men are free. In the third epoch, the spirit is fully aroused and completely aware of its passion and its power for rational freedom.

And what is this Germanic conception of rational freedom? The freedom of the Prussian subjects to obey the Prussian king. And of the Prussian state to compel all the other states to submit to the Prussian king.

For the Germans alone, maintained Hegel, are spiritually alive; all the rest are spiritually dead. "And between life and death there can be absolutely no comparison." This German spirit, or *Gemüth*, is that "undeveloped, indeterminate totality of will in which satisfaction of soul is attained in a correspondingly general and indeterminate way"—whatever that may mean. But the Germans enjoyed this exclusive "soul-satisfaction" ascribed to them in Hegel's philosophy of history. The patience of the German reader, a Frenchman has observed, can outrun even the obscurity of the German writer.

And thus the philosophy of Hegel, based upon unfounded assumptions, couched in a foggy phraseology, and surrounded with a murky halo of mysticism, attempted to transform history into the handmaid of German nationalism.

Nor were the other nations at that period free from the spirit of exclusive self-assurance in their attitude toward world history. For a number of decades there were historians in France—the French spirit, wrote Nisard, is almost synonymous with reason itself—in Serbia, in Spain, in Russia, in Poland, in Italy, in England, even in America, who "sang the praises of their own tribe" and "distorted the failings of all the other tribes." But this crude *tribal* solidarity, in the opinion of the more recent philosophical historians, is bound to give way to a general realization of our *world* solidarity. "To the modern historical student," writes Professor Robinson, "(who is) somewhat familiar with man's long past and aware of the possibilities of the next five hundred thousand years, national arrogance appears well nigh as farcical as the pomposity of an individual man."

For the historian who sees life steadily and sees it whole will recognize the struggles of a man or of a nation as the passing of a cloud over the face of the sun. Each cloud refracts the sunlight in a different way; but the light itself is always the same—a fusion of all the different colors into one white radiance.

*History as a Lesson in Coöperation*

In spite of the temporary nationalistic trend in history, the idea of the inter-relationship of the nations was never lost. Thus Théodore Jouffroy, in his *Philosophy of History*, admitted the differences in the various nations; but he defined these differences in terms neither of superiority nor of inferiority. The three major nations of Europe, for example, are "the Germans, the French, and the English." The Germans are the people of learning; their strong point is the presentation of facts. The French are the lovers of philosophy; their business is the interpretation of the facts as presented by the Germans. The English are the practical organizers and builders; their function is to apply the German facts and the French theories to the solution of the world's industrial, social and political problems. It is the purpose of history, declared Jouffroy, that these three nations and all the other nations should "recognize their special qualities and coöperate for the good of mankind."

The good of mankind, said Auguste Comte, is the one important objective we discover in our philosophic examination of history. In its progress toward this objective, the human intellect has passed through three stages—the philosophical historians were very fond of the figure 3—the theological, the metaphysical, and the scientific. In the theological stage, all human problems were explained in terms of divine will. Thus pestilence or oppression or war was defined as the punishment of the gods for the sins of men. In the metaphysical stage, the same human problems were explained in terms of mysterious abstractions. Theology had yielded to astrology. Sickness and strife were now looked upon as resulting from the influence of the stars upon the fortunes of men. Finally, in the scientific stage, the problems of the world were studied on the basis of the natural principles of cause and effect. From superstition to supposition, from supposition to fact. History, philosophy and science became merged into a single quest for the truth. And the purpose of this quest was the improvement, not of one race or nation or class, but of all human life.

Another adherent of the cyclical theory of human development was Walter Bagehot. He too, like Vico and Hegel and Comte, di-

vided his cycles into three. The three outstanding periods of history, said Bagehot, were the custom-making epoch, the age of conflict, and the era of discussion. In the custom-making epoch, men were obliged to obey the edicts of their kings and the commandments of their priests. The penalty for disobedience was death. In the age of conflict, the masses of men were amalgamated, through migration and war, into groups and nations and states. Loyalty to convention became translated into patriotism "for the cause." But unquestioned obedience to authority was as rigidly enforced as ever. "Theirs not to question why, theirs but to do and die." But the era of discussion introduced representative government, free thought, free speech, free worship, and a loyalty that promised to extend beyond the barriers of the race and the borders of the state. The next historic trend will be from nationalism to cosmopolitanism. The royal City of God will become transformed into the democratic Republic of Man.

### *The Materialistic Interpretation of History—Karl Marx*

Karl Marx was still another adherent of the historic triad. History, he said, is the three-fold development of feudalism into capitalism, and of capitalism into socialism. Next to Hegel, he was perhaps the most influential historian of modern times. But, while Hegel was the apostle of *nationalism*, Karl Marx was the prophet of *internationalism*.

His international socialism has assumed, in some quarters, almost the authority of a new religion. To the workers of the world his materialistic conception of history is no less than a holy gospel. It begins, for them, a new epoch in human progress. Those who have accepted his philosophy have divided all time into B.M. and A.M.—Before Marx and After Marx.

Friedrich Engels, lifelong friend and collaborator of Marx, has given us this definition of the *materialistic conception of history* or *economic interpretation of history*, as the Marxists prefer to designate it: "In every historical epoch the prevailing mode of economic production and exchange, and the social organization necessarily following from it, form the basis upon which is built up, and from

which alone can be explained, the political and intellectual history of that epoch."

Karl Marx was not, as is often alleged, opposed to capitalism, any more than he was opposed to feudalism. He merely believed that both feudalism and capitalism, while necessary in the development of mankind, had outlived their day and were now obsolete. History, he said, is the story of man both as a *product* and as a *producer* of his environment. History makes the man, and the man makes history. In other words, we are the creators, as well as the creatures, of evolution.

This idea of man as being both the mechanism and the mechanic in the evolutionary process has become a cornerstone of the cathedral of Marxian philosophy. In accordance with this conception, the progress of the human race is marked by a gradual process of *evolution* and punctuated now and then by the quickening pulse of *revolution*.

And the latest and, for our own day, the most important of all revolutions, declared Marx, is the *social* revolution. This social revolution—the transition from capitalism to socialism—is the awakening of the laborers to a demand for a justifiable share in the product of their labor.

This awakening, observed Karl Marx, is not only a moral issue, it is a historic fact. All history is a class struggle between the *haves* and the *have-nots*, the possessors and the dispossessed, the princes and the proletarians, the exploiters and the toilers, the masters and the slaves. "And now"—Karl Marx made this assertion in the middle of the nineteenth century—"we see the dawning of the international era of the workingman." Through the common (or *communist*) interests of the workers of the world, national lines are beginning to break down and the history of mankind is entering upon its international phase. This process is slow and painful—for capitalism is fighting today, as feudalism fought in its own day, to preserve itself. But the end, declared Marx, is inevitable. Dying institutions, like dying men, can do nothing to stop the irresistible march of time. History has rung down the curtain upon the old drama. The stage is being set for a new play, with new actors and more elaborate scenery. The world-wide drama of the proletarians.

"You have nothing to lose but your chains. You have a world to win. Workers of the world, unite!"

The worker in the feudalistic age, said Marx, was a chattel. He was bought and sold like an animal or a tool, to be used as long as he was serviceable and then to be cast aside. In the capitalistic era, he is still being bought and sold and treated like a slave—a *wage* slave, a mere *hand*. In order to insure a "reasonable" profit for his master, he is forced to sell himself—that is, his labor—as *cheaply* as possible, and to buy back the product of his own labor as *dearly* as possible. This is a condition for which we can blame neither the capitalist nor the laborer. Both of them are the instruments of historic and economic laws. They are the *creatures* of their environment—the up-to-date result of the trend of human history.

And so the laborer gives more than he receives. He produces more than he consumes. And his employer, in his eagerness to pile up his profits, keeps on manufacturing more and more goods while the laborer is less and less able to catch up with the surplus. And thus there arises a lopsided disproportion between the overproduction on the one hand and the underconsumption on the other hand. There are considerably more things made than the makers can afford to buy. These things keep on accumulating year after year, said Marx, until the employer is compelled to put a stop to his output in order to allow the demand to catch up with the supply.

But a stop to the employer's *output* means an end to the employe's *income*. Since no further goods are to be produced for a time, the worker loses his job, his purchasing power diminishes, the accumulated products remain unsold, the overfilled storehouses cannot be emptied, *and people starve because there is too much food in the world.*

This, said Marx, is the tragic absurdity to which the capitalistic system has brought us! Once every so often—Marx computed it as once every ten years—there is bound to be a financial crisis that affects not any one country but the entire world. For historic trends are not isolated but all-inclusive. Capitalism is everywhere marching to its inevitable death.

And this, declared Marx, is due to the fact that man is not only the *creature* but the *creator* of his environment. He is not only the result of yesterday but the cause of tomorrow. For he can guide the

course of *evolution* through the impulse of *revolution*. History not only inflicts the disease but teaches the remedy.

And this, according to Marx, is the remedy for our present ills as indicated by a philosophic interpretation of history:—The development of bigger and ever bigger machinery brings about the concentration of capital in a few hands. From the individual enterprise to the partnership, from the partnership to the corporation, from the corporation to the trust, from the national trust to the international cartel. The next step is for the *many* hands collectively to take over the management of industry from the *few* hands. "Let the workers assume control over the machinery and *work for themselves* . . . In this way, the many will no longer suffer because of the selfishness of the few." Whether we like it or not, Marx declares, we must accept it as the unavoidable next step in the progress of history. "The centralization of capitalism is slowly but surely paving the way toward the realization of socialism." The confusion of the present system—and Marx would make this assertion as readily of 1947 as of 1875—is but a necessary transition from the isolated feudalism of the Land Lords, through the expanding capitalism of the Industrial Barons, to the coöperative socialism of the Common Man.

### *The Impartial View of History*

From Karl Marx to the First World War, the tendency of the leading historians was away from the individual or tribal or national to the universal point of view. Historical scholarship became more critical, more scientific, more objective, less biased, less personal—in short, less *partial*. Absolute impartiality in the interpretation of history is, of course, humanly impossible. We cannot photograph the past—we can only paint it. And we paint it according to our own lights, our own personalities, our own prejudices, our own perspective, position and class. In at least one respect, Karl Marx was right. *We are* the creatures of our environment. Each of us examines the drama of human endeavor through spectacles colored by his ancestry, birth, physical condition, mental training and material fortune.

Yet the philosophic historians at the turn of the century made an honest attempt to tell the truth as they saw it. They tried to stand

away from their own time and place, and to evaluate the human pageant as spectators rather than as actors. Some of them, indeed, went too far in their objectivity. They painted humanity without any human beings. They were like the artist who exhibited a blank canvas to portray the Jewish crossing of the Red Sea. The fleeing Jews, he explained to the spectators, had already crossed on the left. The pursuing Egyptians had not as yet arrived on the right. And as for the waters of the Red Sea, they had been parted on either side—leaving an empty space between. But the majority of the historians who followed Karl Marx refused to pursue their investigations in an “emotionless void.” It is possible to have a warm affection for mankind without succumbing to an unreasonable passion either *for* or *against* any one section of it. The historian need not abandon his devotion toward his own family or religion or country in order to see other families or religions or countries with a sympathetic eye. The more mature among the historians who wrote in the early part of the twentieth century—“the age of philosophical objectivity”—realized that it is possible to be a patriot without being a jingoist.

And so these historians—Grote, Mahaffy, Gilbert Murray, Andrew Lang, Lewis Henry Morgan and Charles A. Beard, to mention only a handful—based their studies not so much upon the “facts of history” as upon the nature of man. They widened their outlook to include psychology and sociology, along with philosophy, in their survey of history. And the purpose of this survey was to evaluate the past in such a thoroughgoing manner as to explain the present and, in so far as lay in their power, to prepare for the future. For they saw civilization as an uninterrupted current. And some of them saw, or thought they saw, that this current has a definite, dynamic and united trend.

### *The Nightmare of Supernationalism*

Then came the War of 1914, and the world went mad, and the historians went madly along with the rest of the world. Almost all the histories from 1914 to 1920 were outbursts of hysteria—unbalanced adulations of one country or condemnations of another. Many of them became “official documents” of propaganda. In Ger-



many the professors drew up a manifesto, signed by nearly all the leading historians, to "prove" the God-given mission of Prussia to rule the world. In France some of the foremost historians referred to the Germans as "the poisoners of wells, the poisoners of thought, the poisoners of mankind." Even the socialists among the French historians said that "all humanity, to be sure, is one family; but no German is human."

In all the other belligerent countries the historians fell into line. Tolerance was denounced as treachery, understanding as insubordination, sympathy as a sin. Forgotten were the words of Walt Whitman—words that had gained much headway before the war—"my enemy is dead, a man divine as myself is dead." In the confusion of battle it is difficult to see the unifying trend of history. It is said that Spinoza, during the war between France and Holland, once visited the head of the French army, Prince de Condé. When the citizens of The Hague threatened to mob him as a traitor for communication with the enemy, he remarked calmly that he was merely a man trying to have a philosophical chat with a fellow man. This philosophical crossing of the intellectual borders during a physical conflict was beyond the capacity of most of the historians during the First World War. One of the greatest evils of war is that it paralyzes the minds—at least temporarily—not only of the victims but of the victors as well.

### *History and the New World in the Making*

Peace, and the Russian Revolution, and another nightmare of conflict, and the birth of the United Nations. To the credit of the historians it must be recorded that it took them but a short time to recover from the intoxication of 1914. The more intelligent among them saw the inevitable trend toward a coöperative instead of a competitive world. The League of Nations was the first historic attempt to organize this trend into a workable program. The attempt failed, but the historians were not discouraged.

For the progressive steps of history, they realized, are slow and diffident and restrained; but they are continuous and logical and, in spite of all obstacles and defeats, eternally and stubbornly

pointed in the right direction. The human race is like a child learning to walk. In the process of its learning, it suffers many a fall and heartache and painful bruise. But it plods instinctively ahead, always and courageously on the march toward the full-grown man.

In addition to the lesson of man's continual march toward the full-grown understanding of mankind, the historians after the First World War learned another important lesson. And that is, that the conflicts which divide men are not national, but ideological. Communism, capitalism, socialism, fascism, dictatorship, democracy—these ideologies are being fought out between several nations on either side, and between several groups of people within each of the nations. The next step, it appears to the more discerning of the historians, will be the discovery of a peaceful method for scientifically *testing* out these various ideologies instead of savagely *fighting* them out. In a free and civilized humanity, they believe, every group will be allowed to live its own preferred life provided it does not interfere with the right of other groups to live *their* preferred way of life.

This double tendency—the philosophic view that history is a continuous progressive unity, and the philosophic instinct that individuals and races and nations are gradually groping toward a universal harmony—has persisted down to the present day. Even the tragedy of the Second World War has failed to shake this historical vision. The War of 1914 was regarded as a struggle against a nation. The War of 1939 is evaluated as a struggle against an idea—the antiquated idea of the supremacy of one race over all the other races. Not only the historian but the layman is becoming aware of the fact that we are entering upon a new concept of history as *the story of one world*. We are learning in a painful school—with the atomic bomb as a text-book and with the murdered bodies of ten million men as a mute demonstration of our blundering stupidity. For the first time we are beginning to realize that for the abolition of war and for the friendly interchange of our ideas and our goods we need an alliance not of two or of three nations, but of *all the nations*. We know now that the philosophical historians like Ratzel and Robinson and H. G. Wells were right. "A philosophy of the history of the human race," said Ratzel, "must be charged with the conviction that all existence is one." And "there can be no peace,"

added Wells, "but a common peace in all the world; no prosperity but a common prosperity."

### *The Philosophy of History Today*

Today there are no less than seven schools in the philosophic treatment of history. These schools are not antagonistic, but supplementary. Each of them dovetails into the others, and all of them try to survey the story of mankind as an interdependent unit. Briefly summarized, these seven schools are as follows:

1. The *biographical*. This is the view of history as the collective biography of great men. The modern historians of this school, however, have traveled far from the hero-worship of Carlyle. They do not believe in selecting a few individuals for their special consideration and in relegating all the rest of mankind into an obscure background of unimportant rubbish. On the contrary, they recognize the dignity of the common man in the universal current of history, but they trace the general direction of this current through the acts and the ideas of the men who have emerged to ride upon the surface. Even Carlyle recognized (in 1834) that "universal democracy . . . has declared itself an inevitable fact"; and that "he who has any chance to instruct or lead in his days must begin by admitting that (fact)." The biographical historians have not abandoned democracy in favor of a handful of aristocrats. They merely contend that history is not a record of dates, but a story of life.

2. The *scientific* school. This group contends that man's progress can best be interpreted as a gradual development in his understanding of his environment. And the better he understands his environment, the better he can adapt himself to it. History, therefore, is the study of the scientific and the technological evolution of man. First he observes facts; then he discovers how to relate them to one another; finally he learns how to combine them so that he can put them to his use. Notation, correlation, invention—these are the three important steps in the evolution of the human race.

Just now, declare the historians of this school, we are entering upon the age of invention. And already we are learning that inventions are not the accidental product of individual genius, but the intellectual and material give-and-take of many minds and pockets



by the inhabitants of the temperate zone. Very few historians nowadays question the influence of geography—not only of climate, but of mountains, rivers, harbors, rainfall, travel routes and natural resources—upon human progress. In the words of Ratzel, “every geographical problem must be studied historically, and every historical problem must be studied geographically.”

A great stimulus to the geographical conception of history came during the Second World War. And, strangely enough, it came from the Nazis. The world, they said, was a geo-political unit—that is, a unit whose politics must be organized and bound together in accordance with the geographical location of the various countries and with their land and sea and air routes for intercommunication. The world, as even the Nazis realized, is becoming ever smaller and more compact, and ever more united into an aggregate of mutual interests. The more enlightened of the geographic historians see the world now not only as a geo-political, but as a geo-economic, geo-social and geo-ethical unit.

5. The *sociological* school. This school, in the words of Professor Franklin H. Giddings, attempts “to account for the origin, structure and activities of society by the operation of physical, vital and psychical causes, working together in a process of evolution.” History, in other words, is the intimate story of humanity. It is best told not in names, dates, catastrophes and battles, but in anecdotes, episodes, glimpses of physical action and of spiritual insight. Especially important in this view of historical progress is the social aspiration of mankind to make the world a happier place to live in. As time goes on, this social aspiration becomes more articulate, better organized, less tribal, more international.

Just now, believe these historians, we are entering upon a period which can become, if only we will let it, a greater utopia than ever dreamed even by the most optimistic of philosophers. We can produce all we need; we are learning rapidly to overcome disease; we recognize the tragic futility of war; we have discovered and turned to our use many of the secrets of nature; we are the heirs of all that was great in the past—the philosophy of Plato, the poetry of Shakespeare, the music of Beethoven, the painting of Leonardo, the all-embracing gentleness of Christ. This is the time for us to cast off the chains that have held us shackled to the privations, the suspi-

cions and the superstitions of the past. Time to go hopefully, courageously and *coöperatively* ahead!

6. The *idealistic* school. The history of the human race, declare the writers of this school, is the record of the progress of human ideas. The idealistic interpretation of history, observes Professor Shailer Matthews, "must be found . . . in the activities of worthful men" operating through the intermedium of "social relations for the ever more complete subjection of physical nature to human welfare." The dominant factor in history, therefore, is the human mind. The knowledge of all the earlier trends of the human pageant is but a means for informing us how best to take the next step.

And the story of this pageant, maintain the writers of the idealistic school, is the story of the human *spirit*. "History," writes Croce, "is the record of the human mind or spirit and its ideals, in so far as they express themselves in theories and works of art, in practical and in moral actions." This, he asserts, is the true philosophy of history. The writers who sneer at history as being a branch of philosophy are themselves, Croce points out, indulging in philosophical ideas. They are merely throwing a *healthy* philosophy out of the *front* door and sneaking a *sickly* philosophy in through the *back* door.

And so you cannot escape philosophy—the subjection of human activity to the guidance of human ideas—either in your daily life or in the living history of mankind. History is the most vital, the most dynamic, of all the branches of philosophy—declares Croce. For *it represents the human spirit on the march*.

7. The *synthetic* or *inclusive* school. The philosophers of this school recognize the importance of the contributions made by all the other schools. But the value of these contributions can be recognized only when we combine them into a *universal* view of history. Thus, the progress of the human race is understood in its entirety when we survey it as the product of the individualistic, scientific, economic, geographical, sociological and spiritual factors of existence. History is the complete story of the world observed "in the large." No one man, no one race, no one nation can be properly evaluated except in the *totality of relationships* between all men, all races, all nations. History is the *collective* and the *connective* survey of the family of mankind.

In this inclusive survey of history, the present possesses the fruits of the past and the seeds of the future. And at all times the historic forces are crossing and combining peoples, institutions, feelings, faiths and ideas into new discoveries, new activities, new hopes—a newer and better acquaintanceship between man and man.

This historic process is extremely slow, and it teaches us one of the most vital lessons of philosophy—patience. “The development of humanity,” observed Eckermann to Goethe, “seems to be a matter of thousands of years.” “Who knows?” replied Goethe. “Perhaps of millions.” This is the framework that the interested observer of history—and who of us can afford not to be one?—must bear in mind if he wants to live his life in the light of the past and as a light for the future. Patience, tolerance toward honest and unselfish aspiration, intolerance toward dishonest and selfish greed.

We are to survey history, in other words, with a chastened spirit and an open mind.

This sober and openminded view of history—the *common-sense* view—will see it as a steady but sluggish stream. Improvements in human living, and especially in human thinking, are as rare as they are precious. The balance of progress is struck between two extremes—the ultra-conservative who would hold us too far back, and the ultra-radical who would drive us too far forward. Indeed, the very radicals who achieve their ends become the conservatives against those who try to push on to *further* ends. We see this historic fact exemplified in Russia today, where the followers of Stalin are the representatives of “law and order” as against the “lawless and disorderly” followers of Trotsky. New ideas come slowly into the sieve of history. And human experience carefully sifts them out, rejects those among them that are empty, and adds those that are solid to the accumulated treasury of the ages. We can take comfort in this—that nothing good is ever lost, and nothing bad is forever retained.

Another result of the intelligent attitude toward history is the recognition of the everlasting indebtedness of man to man, of generation to generation, of race to race. We have to thank the Babylonians for the division of our day into hours; the Greeks, for the division of our earth into triangles and circles and squares; the Hebrews, for our conception of justice and mercy; the Romans, for

many of our modern laws; the Negroes, for much of our modern music; the Phoenicians, for our alphabet; the Arabians, for our numbers; the Chinese, for our paper; every nook and cranny of the world and every thinking member of the human race, for the ideas and the ideals that keep us hoping and groping and striving on. A real appreciation of this indebtedness, observes Wells, would do much to forward the brotherhood of man.

And this realization of our human brotherhood, observe the historians of the inclusive school, would lessen cruelty and increase kindness. For the heart expands along with the mind. If we see life whole, we see it in a wholesome light—as a precious gift for all to enjoy and to enrich for the enjoyment of wiser men in a happier day.



## IV

# The Evaluation of Government — Politics

### *The Meaning of Politics*

**P**OLITICS in the narrow sense means the activity of a man or of a party to outstrip, by artifice or intrigue, the activities of other men and of other parties in the race for power. In the wider sense, it means the science of government—that part of human conduct which consists in the organization of individuals into a city or a state or a nation, and in their legal and ethical guidance for the preservation of their safety, peace and prosperity.

It was this wider meaning that Aristotle had in mind when he said that “man is a political animal.” The purpose of political philosophy, observed Spinoza, is to trace the development of man from an individual to a social creature. It was very early in his existence that man recognized his need for coöperative living. “Since fear of solitude exists in all men, because no one in solitude is strong enough to defend himself and to procure the necessities of life, it follows that men by nature tend towards social organization.” The power or the cunning of one man “would hardly suffice if men did not arrange mutual aid and exchange.”

Man may be by nature an individual rebel; but by nurture he becomes a submissive citizen. He would like to live *independently*, but he finds himself obliged to live *interdependently*. And so he surrenders part of his individual *right* in order to increase his social *might*. Men may talk, from time to time, about the self-sufficiency

of the individual. They may say with Ibsen that "he is most perfect who best can stand alone;" or with Emerson that "the only right is what is after my own constitution;" or with Stirner that "if only you straighten yourself up, the state will leave you alone." But, deep down in their hearts, men have no desire to be alone. They are "strangers and afraid in a world they never made." They are anxious to huddle together with their kind—to bask in the warmth of their common *kindness*—for their common protection. Even the dictator, who believes that in his own sufficiency he can bestride the world, surrounds himself with henchmen to assist him and with soldiers to protect him. Walt Whitman, who so frequently was so fundamentally right, was wrong however, when he asserted that in time there will be no need for government, since men will be able to rule themselves.

The universal incentive for government arises from the universal desire for self-preservation. Humanity is a living organism with an intuitive feeling that the soundness of the part is inseparable from the solidarity of the whole. Let the individual pride himself as he will on his escape from his political interests; he cannot escape from his social instinct. "What thinks in man," observed Gumplowicz, "is not he, but the society of which he is a part."

Government, therefore, is the social expression of the individual desire to live. "We are political," observes H. G. Wells, "in spite of ourselves." For it is our human purpose to establish harmony among ourselves so that each of us may live with as little danger as possible.

And, at the same time, with as little *restraint* as possible. For we are individualists as well as socialists. The final aim of the state, therefore—to quote Spinoza once more—"is not to dominate men, nor to restrain them by fear; rather it is so to free each man from fear that he may live and act with full security and without injury to himself or his neighbor . . . It is to enable their bodies and their minds to function safely. It is to lead men to live by, and to exercise, a free reason . . . Thus the end of the state is really liberty."

Man wants to be protected, but not hampered, in his desire to live and to express himself. He is a political animal not perhaps by choice but by necessity. He believes in the Jeffersonian ideal of government. "That government is best," said Jefferson, "which

governs least." For the aim of man is to be not only tolerably safe but reasonably free.

Some men, unfortunately, strive to be *unreasonably* free. They try to turn government into an instrument for their own freedom to encroach upon the safety and the freedom and even the rights and the lives of their fellow men. This perversity on the part of backward states and individuals has led a number of writers to deny the wisdom of any government whatsoever. If the state is to subserve the interests of the selfish—if, as Tolstoy observed, "government is the association of property owners for the protection of their property from those who need it"—why not abolish the state and take refuge in philosophical anarchism? "The government of man by man in every form," wrote Proudhon, "is slavery. The highest perfection of a society is found in the union of order and anarchy." This statement is tantamount to saying that man's salvation lies in some sort of utopia constructed upon the *orderliness of disorder*.

And thus the extremes on either side of a balanced political philosophy have—it appears—missed the point. The advocates of government for the freedom of the few have forgotten the passionate hunger of all men to be free. And the dreamers of freedom from every sort of government have forgotten the equally passionate desire of all men to be protected. Liberty without safety is undesirable; safety without liberty, impossible.

The political necessity of man, therefore, is twofold: he needs freedom *and* protection. His life, whether he is aware of it or not, is a constant coördination between his individualism and his socialism—his will for self-assertion and his wish for self-defence. In this effort at coördination man has found, and tried, and been tried by, many forms of government. All these various forms, however, can be summarized under six headings: *tyranny, constitutional monarchy, oligarchy, aristocracy, democracy, and communism*. Tyranny, or absolute monarchy, or dictatorship, is the subjection of all to the caprices of one. Constitutional monarchy is the submission of all to the will of one—subject, however, to the liberalizing influence of a written constitution. Oligarchy is the rule of the rich over the destinies of the poor. Aristocracy is the government of the "noble" few over the "common" populace. Democracy is the "government

of the people, *by* the people, *for* the people." And communism is the common ownership, under government control, of the natural resources and the machinery and the public property of the country.

All the above systems of government are very old. Communism, for example, is mentioned by Herodotus as having existed in many parts of the world as far back as three thousand years ago. Democracy is discussed in the *Politics* of Aristotle as "one of the most ancient though not one of the most desirable" institutions. (Aristotle, we must remember, was the tutor and protégé of the undemocratic King Alexander. Even a philosopher is the creature of his environment. Aristotle's attitude toward democracy under Alexander was no different from that of a German philosopher under Hitler.)

And so governments have been tried, and discarded, and tried again and again. But always the tendency has been toward a maximum of protection under a minimum of laws. "When a nation has too many laws," observed a forgotten Chinese philosopher, "it is like a garrulous old man—on the way out to the grave." To paraphrase Dr. Will Durant, the highest function of government is to have less legislation and more education. Less prohibition, and more protection. Less concern for the strong who can help themselves, and more compassion for the weak who need to be helped along. Less freedom to exploit, and greater freedom to fight against being exploited. The political ideal of man is to develop a state—is it a utopian dream?—in which the citizens will be slaves of none, masters of none, but will work peacefully together for the security and the freedom of all. Such an ideal, should it ever be realized, would bring to the head of the government not politicians but statesmen.

### *How Politics Arose*

The human instinct for companionship is universal. A companion—from the Latin *cum*, with, and *panis*, bread—is a person who breaks bread with another person. Among the savages to this day, when a man sits down to eat in the fields, he calls out loudly for some one to join him. "Anybody hungry? I have enough for two." A recent traveler in Samoa told a native about the poor in London. "Some of the people," said the traveler, "are actually starving."

"Starving?" asked the astonished native. "What about his neighbors? Don't they feed him?" The American Indians, said an early missionary, "would rather lie down on an empty stomach than have it laid to their charge that they neglected to satisfy the needy. They look upon themselves as but one great family."

As time went on, and the population became greater while the food supply became proportionally smaller, men began to *eat* one another instead of *feeding* one another. Individual goodness was no longer sufficient. Social regulation was necessary. In their desperate struggle for food and for protection, men began to look for a set of rules to organize them and for a leader to guide them. And thus government became established on earth.

The earliest form of government was democratic, just as the earliest form of economics was communistic. The chief was the man selected by the elders of the tribe—sometimes by the deliberations of the entire tribe—to administer the laws for the mutual benefit of the members. These laws were based upon the principle of coöperation—not only among the members of the individual tribe, but among the different tribes that lived and hunted and cultivated the soil in the same general neighborhood. This "neighborliness" among various groups was already ancient history to the native Americans when the Mayflower arrived at Plymouth. The father of the United Nations was neither Woodrow Wilson nor Franklin D. Roosevelt, but a primitive Indian who organized the Iroquois League of Nations. The purpose of this league was "to promote prosperity, to preserve friendship, and to keep the peace."

And—here is a goal for our United Nations to aim at!—the League of the Iroquois kept the "Great Peace" for three hundred years.

But universal peace, at least among the primitives, was impossible. Man is not only a political but a quarrelsome animal. An insatiable hunger, both for food and for glory, served as a continual spur to the ancient—as to the modern—aggressive individuals and tribes.

And out of this intertribal war arose the modern state. "The state as distinct from tribal organization," writes Lester Ward, "begins with the conquest of one race by another." The conquerors enslave the conquered—men have now reached the stage of *ex-*

*plotting* instead of *eating* one another—they settle down as “the nobility,” their commander becomes the king, and his power is proclaimed as the unquestioned law of the land.

And thus we see *kinship* degenerated into *kingship*—for the progress of the human race is not a current that flows steadily forward, but a stream that meanders and frequently recedes and at times seems to be standing still. Yet the general motion, in spite of the periodic lapses, is in the direction of the natural law of the waters and the worlds—from chaos to order, from confusion to fusion, from warfare toward peace.

We see the operation of this law even in the most primitive of states. That government is most successful which can best organize its different elements into a working unit. The state is the unifier of men. It is the foundation of all human order. It weaves diverse interests and impulses into a pattern of practical collaboration. The early state began as an aggressive force; but its tendency from the outset was to become a progressive guide. The human experiment seems to work along the following line: First the principle of political—as well as of social and economic—coöperation is tested out on a very small scale. Then, as humanity travels farther afield, and as the world grows bigger and society more complex, the coöperative spirit gives way to the competitive. Individuals and tribes and nations are reshuffled, reorganized and reëducated to repeat their original experiment of coöperation on a larger scale. This is the principle of Vico’s spiral conception of history. The process of experimentation, from the coöperative to the competitive and then back to the coöperative on an ever widening scale, leads humanity from the family to the clan, from the clan to the tribe, from the tribe to the state, from the state to the nation, from the nation to the world. Our so-called “modern” ideals, therefore—our golden dreams of utopia—are perhaps nostalgic memories of the past, architectural blue-prints for the rebuilding of the beautiful little chapel of yesterday into the greater and more beautiful temple of tomorrow.

### *The Oriental Idea of the State*

In the earlier stages of society, men lived under the inspiration of principles; it was only later that they began to live under the

compulsion of laws. Alfred Russel Wallace, the co-founder with Darwin of the theory of evolution, wrote of "communities of savages" he had visited in the Orient "who have no law . . . but the public opinion of the village freely expressed. Each man scrupulously respects the rights of his fellows . . . In such a community all are nearly equal." Herman Melville found a similar degree of mutual respect, unenforced by law, among the Marquesas Islanders. "Everything went on in the valley (of these savages) with a harmony and smoothness unparalleled, I will venture to assert, in the most select, refined, and pious associations of mortals in Christendom."

We must not, however, run away with a blind and sentimental eulogy of the "noble savage." Primitive man, though kindly disposed in "fair weather," could be very cruel in times of storm and stress. Especially when he was crossed. Then it was every man for himself, with no central authority to enforce fair play. The individual was the sole judge of every crime actually or allegedly committed against him.

And he was the sole executioner. It was the first objective of government to check the chaotic anarchy of individual revenge with the organized justice of a public trial. The *legalized* punishment for crime was still as severe as the *pre-legal* punishment. An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a crime for a crime. But vengeance had become public instead of private; and the sobering precedent of experience had replaced the emotional prejudice of the moment.

The next objective of government was to *prevent* as well as to *punish* crime. And then it became the function of the chief not only to *interpret* the laws but also to *make* them. It goes without saying, of course, that many of the laws were designed to enrich the chief rather than to protect the people. In primitive society, the land was generally held in common. In the emerging state, the land was appropriated by the king who kept the choicest tracts for himself and parceled out the balance among his retainers.

One of the earliest states thus appropriated by royalty was Sumeria. The Sumerian king controlled not only all the land but all the commerce of his country. He was a terrorizing and terrorized despot. For he not only kept his subjects in slavery, but he

was himself a slave to the continual threat of assassination. His palace was built upon a rock accessible to only one man at a time. At intervals in the recesses of the rock there were secret guards who could see every visitor without being seen themselves. A regular Berchtesgaden of a place. And the Dictator of Berchtesgaden might have learned the lesson of the palace on the Sumerian mountain. There is no fortress isolated enough to protect the tyrant from the march of progress. It was the military aggressiveness of Sumeria that brought about its destruction at the hands of an organized group of angry states.

The next kingdom of which we have any historical record is Egypt. The Egyptian Pharaohs enriched themselves not only through the slavery of the Jews and of other foreigners, but also—as the ancient historian, Diodorus Siculus, informs us—through the enslaved natives, little children as well as grown men and women, who worked in the Egyptian mines. “These, sometimes alone, sometimes with their entire families, the kings send to the gold mines . . . to secure for themselves a big revenue . . . As these workers can take no care of their bodies, and have not even a garment to hide their nakedness, there is no one who . . . would not pity them because of the excess of their misery. For there is no forgiveness or relaxation at all for the sick, or the maimed, or the old . . . but all with blows are compelled to stick to their labor until, worn out, they die in their servitude.”

The slaves not only mined the gold, but cultivated the land and built the castles and the pyramids for their king. “The pyramids were cemented,” wrote an ancient poet, “with human blood.” The tremendous stones were quarried, polished, transported and heaved into place by human muscle. The slaves carried not only the stones but the sedans of their overseers who went along with their whips to see that nobody “fell down” on his job.

Yet along with the cruelty of the Pharaohs came a legal code with an instinctive leaning toward justice. Some of the laws were harsh in the extreme—for the subjects “must know their place.” Noses, ears and hands were cut off for the slightest misdemeanor against the will of the king. Cases of more flagrant disobedience were punished by stoning, strangling, beheading, empaling on a javelin, or burning at the stake. The most excruciating form of



torture was to be embalmed alive in a coating of acids. Officers for enforcing the law were scarce. Fear alone was the best policeman.

Yet the people were held in check not only by their fear of the king, but also by their sense of his fairness. It was his purpose, he declared, "to hear what the people say in their demands, and to make no sense of distinction between great and small." In a papyrus roll that has come down to the present day, the king instructs his Vizier to "do everything in accordance with the law" and to "give every man his right." For "it is an abomination against the gods to show partiality"; and "it is the glory of a prince to do justice."

We find the same sort of personal greed, tempered by a sense of public justice, in the early kingdoms of Babylonia, Assyria and Persia. In Babylonia the government was based upon the "law of equivalent retaliation." Thus, if a house collapsed and killed the occupant, the architect was condemned to death. If a man killed another man's daughter, his own daughter must die for the crime. Later on, the death penalty was in many instances replaced by the "adequate" payment of a fine. If a man knocked out the tooth of a commoner, he paid a fine of ten shekels. If the victim was a nobleman, the penalty was sixty shekels. But the price for an injury to the king's tooth, or even to the king's dignity, remained always the same—death. In Assyria, the king punished the crime of a plebeian by ordering his head to be crushed with a club; but he honored a patrician criminal by having him thrown from a high tower. Frequently, as in Babylonia, the Assyrian law demanded the punishment of the children for the sins of their parents. "For this is *God's* will, and therefore it must be the *King's* will." So, too, in Persia, the will of the sovereign—he called himself the King of Kings—was accepted as the will of God. The subjects were not only forbidden to *question* his brutality, they were compelled to *glorify* it. "Our King, praise the Lord, has no compassion in his heart." When the king shot an innocent young man to death, the victim's father was expected to congratulate his Majesty on the excellence of his aim. To question the king was fatal. On one occasion a man who had lost four of his sons in battle petitioned Xerxes to exempt his only remaining son from military service. Whereupon Xerxes ordered the son's body to be cut in two and to be placed on either side of the road along which the army was to march.

And thus the early governments looked upon the governed as tools to be organized and wielded for the benefit of the king. The laws of these primitive kings were often couched in moderate language. But they were velvet gloves that concealed an iron fist.

Yet the undying human instinct for justice found its way now and then even to the heart of a king. Once, when a judge under Cambyses handed down an unfair decision, the king ordered him to be flayed alive and used his skin for upholstering the judgment seat. The law of retaliation was gradually reducing all the ranks to an equal hearing of their rights.

It was in India that this tendency toward a Bill of Rights made its first definite progress. Here the king appointed a Council of Wise Men to help him regulate the administration of "commerce, customs, and justice." He organized the courts on a basis of "ascending wisdom"—inferior, superior, supreme. He built hospitals, provided sanitation, and distributed food in times of famine. He taxed the rich to relieve the poor, and he instituted public works to take care of the unemployed.

Yet "uneasy lies the head that wears a crown." One of the most enlightened of the Hindu kings, Chandragupta, was so fearful of assassination that he slept in a different bedroom every night. For, with all his magnanimity, he was but a product of his time. Together with the other ancient kings, he believed in maintaining his power—not only against foreign nations but against his own people—by "intrigue, propaganda, aggression, deceit, and spies." A king's confidential spy, history has demonstrated, is almost always his most dangerous enemy.

An attempt to stop the lust for royal aggression was made in China—if not by the kings, at least by the philosophers. "The king asked Confucius about government, saying: 'What is your opinion about killing the unprincipled?' And Confucius replied: 'Sir, in the administration of your government, why should you resort to killing at all? If the king desires only what is good, the people will be good . . . He who treats his people with kindness may be compared to the polar star, which keeps its place while all the other stars turn toward it.'"

Another Chinese philosopher, Mo-Ti, is said to have dissuaded his king from invading the province of Sung by showing him the

wisdom of universal peace. "Before I met you," said the king, "I wanted to conquer the state of Sung. But since I have spoken to you, I wouldn't take it unjustly even if I could have it without a fight." "In that case," replied Mo-Ti, "I have already given you the state of Sung. If only you will persist in your righteous cause, I will give you the whole world."

Still another philosopher, Mencius, tried to cure his king of the "infirmities of thoughtless ambitions and useless wealth." If the king wants to be safe, he said, he must provide for the safety of his subjects. Men are by nature eager to search for the good, if only the king will show them the way. "If your Majesty will institute a government whose action will be benevolent, this will cause all the officers in the kingdom to wish to stand in your Majesty's court, and all the farmers to wish to plough in your Majesty's fields, and all the merchants to wish to sell their goods in your Majesty's markets, and all the strangers to wish to travel over your Majesty's roads, and all the people who feel aggrieved to wish to abide by your Majesty's decision. And so it is up to your Majesty to keep your people united, happy and free."

But the king, adds the biographer with delicious humor, replied to Mencius: "I am stupid, and I cannot follow your advice."

As a further commentary on the stupidity of man, we learn that Mencius was rejected by the princes for his radicalism and denounced by the radicals for his conservatism. Yet he was one of the first to proclaim the sovereignty of the people over the prerogatives of the king. "The people," he said, "are the most important part of a nation; the king, the least important." For the king has no right to destroy his people, but the people have a right to destroy their king.

This rebellious idea was shared by some of the writers among the ancient Hebrews. When the Jewish people, who were being ruled by their "judges," began to clamor for a king, the prophet Samuel warned them against taking such a step. "And Samuel said, This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you: He will take your sons and appoint them for himself, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen; and some shall run before his chariots.

"And he will appoint him captains over thousands, and captains

over fifties; and he will set them to ear his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots.

"And he will take your daughters to be confectionaries, and to be cooks, and to be bakers.

"And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your olive-yards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants.

"And he will take your menservants, and your maidservants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work.

"He will take the tenth of your sheep, and ye shall be his servants.

"And ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen you; and the Lord will not hear you in that day."

But the Jews, we are told, did not listen to their prophet. "And they said, Nay, but we shall have a king over us; that we also may be like all the nations; and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles."

And so the Jews gave up their earlier idea of coöperation—"in those ancient days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes"—and organized themselves, "like all the nations" of that period, into a competitive fighting state.

Yet the democratic ideal never quite died among the Hebrews. New times, new kings, new troubles, new wars. But always, in the teaching of the prophets, the single golden thread that was to bind all humanity together. Justice, Mercy, Peace.

### *The Political Philosophy of Plato*

In Plato we find the first attempt at a philosophical evaluation of government. Plato's ideal state was a republic—ruled, however, not by designing politicians but by discerning statesmen. If life were simple and men sublime, observed Plato, there would be no need of any government at all. We would have a communistic sort of anarchism. Plato imagines such a utopian—and impossible—state of affairs. "Let us consider the life of such a state. Will the people not produce corn, and wine, and clothes, and shoes, and build houses for themselves? . . . They will feed on barley and wheat—

(a strictly vegetarian diet)—baking the wheat and kneading the flour, making noble puddings and loaves; these they will serve up on a mat of reeds or of fresh leaves”—note the absence of dishes and of the slavery of dish-washing in this imaginary Garden of Eden—“as they recline upon beds of yew or of myrtle boughs. And they and their children will feast, drinking of the wine which they have made, wearing garlands on their heads, and having the praises of the gods on their lips. And thus they will live in a sweet communal society, and they will have a care that their families”—through the practice of birth control?—“do not exceed their means. For they will try to avoid poverty and its consequence—war . . . And of course they will have a relish to spice their food—salt, and olives, and cheese, and cabbages, and onions, and any country herbs which are suitable for boiling. And we shall give them a dessert of figs, and pulse, and beans, and myrtle berries, and beech nuts, which they will roast on the fire . . . And they will eat and drink in moderation. And with such a diet they may be expected to live to a good old age, and to bequeath a similar life to their children after them.”

But such a Paradise on earth is not for man. For man is a greedy animal. In our desire to plunder one another, we unite ourselves into predatory gangs—the rich against the poor, the strong against the weak, the masters against the slaves, and everybody against everybody else. We congregate into cities, so as to be closer to one another's pockets. And we aim at social distinction through anti-social exploitation.

And thus we create governments—not to help the aspirations of the many, but to sanction the aggressions of the few. But even the few are at constant jealousy and hatred and strife against one another. And so we have a continual succession of different governments—from monarchy to aristocracy, or rule by the land lords; from aristocracy to plutocracy, or control by the money lords; from plutocracy to stratocracy, or command by the military clique.

But always the common people are restless, and waiting for their chance. When the usurping governments grow weak through their excessive greed, just as the individual grows weak through his excessive gluttony, they fall a prey to disease and are easily overthrown by revolution. And thus finally “democracy comes. The

poor overwhelm the rich, slaughtering some and banishing the rest; and the people get their equal share of freedom and power."

Yet even democracy has a fatal weakness—the inability of the people to choose their leaders wisely and to hold them strictly to account. "As to the people, they have no understanding, and only repeat what their rulers are pleased to tell them." This unintelligence on the part of "the masses"—a facetious journalist has changed the phrase to "them asses"—leaves democracy always at the mercy of unscrupulous demagogues. The crowd is so "hungry for honey" that any dictator—a Hitler, for example—can flatter them into implicit obedience to his personal whims. And so democracy can easily degenerate into dictatorship; for the gullible voters too readily allow their "protector" to become their destroyer.

Strange, said Plato, how in the selection of our shoes we go to a man trained carefully for his job, but in the selection of our leaders we go to men who are clever at getting votes and assume that they are good at making laws. In our *physical* illness, we choose a doctor not for his looks or his eloquence or his ability to tell a joke. The only thing we ask for is skill. But in our *political* illness we forget the competent doctors and choose the oratorical quacks. "How charming we are! Always doctoring ourselves (with these quacks), increasing and complicating our disorders, fancying we shall be cured by some nostrum which somebody advises us to try, never getting better but always growing worse."

But is there no remedy to this? Definitely yes, replies Plato. We must allow ourselves to be ruled, not by our craftiest politicians but by our wisest statesmen. "Until philosophers are rulers, or the rulers of this world have the spirit and the power of philosophy, and wisdom and statesmanship meet in the same man . . . the human race will never be cured of its ills."

The philosopher-ruler of our ideal state—Plato's Republic—must be selected by a process of education which gradually eliminates all the unfit and brings to the top only the wisest and the best. In this educational sifting we must pay no attention to rank or fortune or social prestige. The only things that count are a superior mind and a noble heart. We all have an equal right, but not an equal ability, to rule. "Citizens, you are brothers, but God has framed you differently. Some of you have the power of command; and these he

has made of gold . . . others of silver, to be auxiliaries; others again, who are to be farmers and laborers, he has made of brass and iron." But these different qualities are not handed down rigidly from father to son. "Since you are of the same original family, a golden parent will sometimes have a silver son, or a silver parent a golden son." Hence political preferment, and every other kind of advancement, should be proffered on the basis not of birth but of worth. "If the son of a golden or a silver parent has an admixture of brass, or the other way around, then nature requires a transposition of ranks." In this way the right job will always go to the right man, and the leadership of the state will go to the worthiest man of them all. The man of purest gold. "For an oracle says that when a man of brass or of iron rules the state, it will be destroyed."

In our perfect Republic, then, every man will have an equal chance to be educated for the supreme job of philosopher-king. But in the process of education, only the mentally and morally elect will prove themselves worthy of governing the state. We shall thus have *educational* instead of *political* election.

And having been thus intelligently elected, the guardians of the state will "devote themselves wholly to the maintenance of freedom in the state, making this their sole business and engaging in no activity that does not bear upon this end."

But human nature, even with the best of education and intention, is weak. How shall we safeguard our guardians against the temptation of power and wealth? By establishing among them, said Plato, a common interest *in*, through a common ownership *of*, their material goods. "None of them should have any property beyond what is absolutely necessary; neither should they have a private house, with bars and bolts. Their provisions should be only such as are required by . . . men of temperance and courage. They are to receive from the citizens a fixed rate of pay, enough to meet the expenses of the year." As for the temptations that arise through family demands, Plato has a simple remedy. The guardians are to have no private families. Their wives and their children, like their material goods, are to be their common possession and care. "Among friends, all things must be shared alike."

They must share their meals, their lodgings, their labor, their minds, their hearts, to one common end—the harmonious admini-

stration of the government. They must have only one desire—honor—the reward of a worthy job worthily done. “Gold and silver they already have from God. The diviner metal is within them, and they have therefore no need of that earthly dross which passes under the name of gold . . . Neither have they any need for homes or lands (or families) of their own. For then they would become private housekeepers and farmers and husbands instead of public guardians.” Their personal interests would bring them personal cares and quarrels. “Hating and being hated, plotting and being plotted against, they would bring ruin upon the state as well as upon themselves.”

And thus the Platonic rulers of the state, in order to insure the best sort of government, are to be men—or women—of gravity, decorum, courage, unselfishness, scholarship, wisdom, discrimination, simplicity, restraint. (Where, even today, can we find such candidates for political office?) And the sole purpose of this perfect state under its perfect government, declared Plato, will be the dispensation of equal justice among all citizens.

And what is the Platonic idea of justice? Whole-hearted attunement between citizen and citizen, and between the citizens and the state. “That state is *just* when every man legitimately performs his job without interference *by*, or interference *against*, the legitimate performance of other men’s jobs.”

### *Aristotle’s Ideas on Government*

Aristotle begins his political discussion with a criticism of Plato’s *Republic*. This ideal government is impossible, he declares, because of “the wickedness of human nature.” Men are not good enough for this sort of life. Neither—he adds—is this sort of life good enough for men. Communism is not a blessing, but a curse. For it robs us of one of the most precious of human gifts—privacy. The barrack-life existence of the guardians is not a reward for good service; it is more like a prison sentence.

Moreover, the public ownership of property dilutes responsibility. “That which is common to the greatest number has the least attention bestowed upon it. Everybody thinks chiefly of his own, hardly ever of the public, interest.” Let everybody have his own



house, his own garden, his own slaves, his own interests. But let him be trained in benevolence, so that he will share the use of his property with his friends. It is only through private property—an amazing argument!—that we can develop the spirit of charity.

And it is only through private families that we can cultivate the instinct for love. Where men have their wives and their children in common, "love will be watery." If sons have a common fatherhood, they will suffer from a common neglect. It is much better, said Aristotle, to be a private cousin than a public son. "Of the two qualities which chiefly inspire regard and affection—that a thing is your own, and that it arouses your solicitude—neither can exist in the communistic state."

Still another weakness in Plato's Republic, maintains Aristotle, is the equality of women. (What Aristotle *really* feared, it would seem, was the *superiority* of women. For he was married to a princess, who must have frequently made him conscious of his "inferior" rank.) The relation of woman to man, he said, ought to be as slave to master. For, in the scale of creation, woman is an unfinished and therefore imperfect man. A woman's place is not—as Plato would have it—in the government, but in the home. No amount of education, asserted Aristotle, could make woman the equal of man. "The virtue of a man is best exercised in commanding; of a woman, in obeying."

Finally—and here Aristotle summarizes all his objections to Plato's politics in a single sweeping objection—"let us not disregard the experience of the ages. Surely, in the multitude of years, if such a Republic (as Plato's) were good, it would not have remained unknown."

With these objections—"I do not agree with Plato," writes Bertrand Russell, "but if anything could make me do so, it would be Aristotle's arguments against him"—Aristotle sweeps aside the Platonic theory of government and proceeds with his own idea. First of all, he considers three kinds of "good" government—monarchy, aristocracy, and constitutional authority; and three kinds of "bad" government—tyranny, oligarchy, and democracy. There is little choice, he said, between the last two. For in the oligarchy the rich govern without any consideration for the poor, and in democracy the poor govern without any regard for the rich. In

either case there arises a class friction which leads to the injury of the state.

For the best governed state is the state with the least amount of friction. On this point Aristotle is in thorough agreement with Plato. Where there is no discontent, there is no revolution—a plague that tormented the ancient Greeks no less frequently than the modern South Americans. And the main cause of discontent is the lack of understanding between the rich and the poor. The rich (oligarchs) believe that their superior wealth gives them superior virtues; the poor (democrats) believe that an equality of freedom should be followed by an equality of wealth. And both sides put their belief into action. The oligarchs in some of the Greek states, said Aristotle, swore an oath—with a frankness that would abash even a modern dictator—"I will be an enemy to the people, and I will devise all the harm against them which I can." And the democrats, not to be outdone, made it their avowed purpose "to kill not only oligarchy but the oligarchs as well."

And what, asks Aristotle, is the cure for all this? Not any particular *form* of government, but a strong organization *within* the government for the suppression of the discontented, and more especially for the abolition of the causes that make for discontent—that is, the extremes of poverty and of wealth.

Keep everybody happy and everybody in his place—an order far bigger even, it would seem, than Plato's. Keep the woman satisfied with her lowliness and her loneliness. The Athenian "gentleman" was not expected to waste his leisure hours in the company of his wife. A lashing whip is a good answer to an impudent tongue. "Severity is the husband's duty; silence, the woman's glory."

Keep the women in their place. And also the workers and the slaves. Let each man be satisfied with his allotted destiny. "From the hour of their birth some are marked out for subjection, and others, for command." Some are born as human hands; others, as human minds. "He who can foresee with his mind is by nature intended to be lord and master; and he who can work only with his body is by nature a slave." So far as the world's work is concerned, the toiler and the tool are on an equal level. "The tool is a lifeless slave; the slave, a living tool."

Aristotle, together with the other Greeks, looked upon manual

labor with the utmost contempt. His motto was not, "Thou shalt earn thy bread by the sweat of thy brow;" but, "Thou shalt extract thy bread from the sweat of thy *servant's* brow." The best form of government, he said, "will not admit mechanics to citizenship." For mechanics are "incurable fools." Which is exactly what a mechanic would say of philosophers. For each man is an ignoramus in every trade but his own. A young worker, employed by an automobile company to teach new customers how to drive, complained recently that "the professors is the biggest dopes. Can't teach 'em to shift, reverse, turn around, or do nothin' right."

But Aristotle, the philosopher of a non-industrial age, would have no traffic with mechanics in the running of the state. Nor with farmers or businessmen or bankers. "At Thebes there was a (very good) law that no man could hold office who had not retired from business ten years before." Every sort of trade, said Aristotle, is undignified—an ambition worthy of foreigners and fishwives. No free man should engage in business. Especially in banking, which to Aristotle was the "lowest kind of commerce . . . For this sort of commerce makes a gain out of money itself, and not from its natural use . . . Money was intended as an instrument of exchange, and not as the mother of interest . . . This unnatural birth of money from money is of all modes of gain the most unnatural."

And thus the citizens of Aristotle's ideal state must be educated freemen—gentlefolk who have inherited good minds and good fortunes, and who therefore can look down with disdain upon manual or financial endeavor as they ride to power upon the backs of their slaves. And these free citizens are to marry at the age of thirty-seven; but the wives at the time of their marriage are to be about twenty. This disparity in their ages, observed Aristotle, would serve two desirable purposes: it would enable the husband to assert complete mastery over the wife, and it would give both of them an approximately equal period of fertility. "Since time of generation is commonly limited within the age of seventy years in the man, and fifty in the woman, the commencement of their union should conform to these periods." Otherwise, "if the man is still able to beget children while the woman is unable to bear them, quarrels and differences will arise."

And the children of these free citizens "should be molded to the form of government under which they live." They should be taught to command (their inferiors) and to obey (their superiors). "The good citizen should be capable of both." But above all they should be taught to "disdain any labor that would stunt their body or any trade that would tempt them to earn money." They should learn music sufficiently to enjoy it, but not to play it. "For no free citizen will play an instrument unless drunk."

Such is the citizen of Aristotle's ideal state—a sort of aristocratic democracy, the representative rule of the favored few who are obliged neither to toil nor to spin, but who can devote their knowledge and their talent to the perpetuation of a good government. That is, a government good for themselves. Complete democracy is bad, because it decides elections by number rather than by intelligence. Oligarchy is bad, because it buys and sells elections—often fraudulently, almost never with an eye to the candidate's good intentions or genuine worth. Monarchy is bad, because great virtue is rarely compatible with great strength. Aristocracy is bad, because too often the aristocrats have nothing but their nobility and are therefore tempted to ally themselves with those who have money. All governments, in short, are bad in this imperfect world of ours. And therefore, said Aristotle, we must be realistic in our ideals. "We must ask ourselves what is the best constitution for most states, and the best life for most men; assuming neither a standard of excellence which will be above ordinary persons, nor an education exceptionally favored by nature or circumstance, nor yet a utopian state which will be only an aspiration; but having in mind such a life as the majority will be able to share, and a form of government to which states in general can attain."

And the wisest government in this practical world of ours, concluded Aristotle, is democratic election by aristocratic voters. Democratic election, because "the individual is liable to be overcome by anger, or by some other passion, and then his judgment is necessarily perverted; but it is hardly supposed that a number of persons would all get into a passion and go wrong at the same moment." Aristocratic voters, because their passions are more restrained and their minds better schooled. By all means, said Aris-

totle, let us have the ballot. But let the ballot be limited to the men of brains.

### *The Roman Republic*

The first government that tried out democracy—or, if you prefer, republicanism—on a large scale was Rome. The Greek democracies were small “city states,” and the public assemblies were nothing more than town meetings where all the people argued, quarreled, voted, and agreed to disagree until the next meeting. But the Roman Republic grew, through conquest and assimilation, into an extended political unit that served as a model for the more liberal governments of the present day.

The Roman Republic began with the expulsion of King Tarquin the Proud in the sixth century B.C. The free people of the city were divided at that period into two classes—the patricians and the plebeians. The government consisted of two consuls and a senate—the creation of the senate being a distinct departure from any previous system of human politics. The senators were appointed by the consuls from among the patricians alone. The eligibility to the consulship also was confined solely to the patricians. The plebeians were excluded not only from holding office but from intermarriage with the higher class. Their single political privilege was the right to vote.

But the plebeians were dissatisfied with their lot. And for several hundred years they kept up a persistent struggle for greater social and political recognition.

For a time the patricians held on to their advantages. Their powers grew with the growing military power of Rome. As the generals extended their conquests, they divided the new lands among the patricians. But the plebeian soldiers, who had done the fighting, found themselves so deeply in debt upon their discharge that they couldn't even keep up their *old* land.

For this disease they found a simple remedy—a general strike. This was another departure from any earlier form of human activity. On two occasions they marched out of Rome, putting a stop to all work within the city and threatening to build a “more liberal” city of their own. The first of these strikes of the Roman prole-

tarians was in 494 B.C. "After the Latin War," writes J. Wells in his *History of Rome*, "the pressure of debt had become excessive, and the plebeians saw with indignation their friends, who had often served their state bravely in the legions, thrown into chains and reduced to slavery at the demand of patrician creditors." And so the returned veterans "refused any longer to obey the consuls, and marched . . . to the Sacred Mount . . . There they prepared to found a new city, since the rights of the citizens were denied to them in the old one. The patricians were compelled to give way; and the plebeians, returning to Rome from the *First Secession*, received the privilege of having (political) officers of their own." The *Second Secession*, taking place on a similar occasion as a result of similar abuses, was equally successful.

Another weapon wielded successfully by the plebeians in their struggle for political power was the threat of tyranny. There arose several such potential "tyrants"—today we would call them demagogues or dictators, or perhaps labor leaders—who, though they invariably came to a bad end themselves, nevertheless succeeded in wresting important reforms for the plebeians from the patricians. Now and then, to forestall a rebellion on the part of the plebeians, the patricians would set up a dictator of their own. But some of these dictators—like Camillus, for example—were more concerned with the people's welfare than with their own power. Camillus, a successful general, was appointed by the patricians to "put down" the plebeians. Camillus, however, was wiser than his fellow patricians. Instead of putting the people down, he pulled them up. He granted most of the plebeian demands, induced the patricians to see the wisdom of his course, and then dedicated a temple to the Goddess of Peace and voluntarily resigned his power.

This practical wisdom on the part of the more tolerant patricians was the final—and perhaps the most important—factor in the equalization of the Roman classes. Little by little, patrician consuls enacted laws to give wider latitude to plebeian voters; patrician girls married plebeian businessmen; patrician senators recommended the appointment of plebeian relatives to their "august" body; and patricians and plebeians alike were becoming united into a single Roman power for conquering and enslaving the world.

Yet even in this conquest the Romans displayed a measure of

political wisdom. They incorporated their beaten antagonists into their Republic on terms that almost bordered on equality with themselves. Their motto was—divide, and conquer, and then reunite. Some of the defeated cities became Roman, with full voting power extended to the inhabitants of those cities. Others, though withheld from Roman citizenship, were allowed to retain self-government and to trade and intermarry with the Romans. And throughout the Roman dominion, the government laid down a system of roads to serve as open arteries for "Latin speech and Roman rule."

But not for Roman statesmanship. And therein lay one of the principal reasons for the dissolution of the Roman Republic. The Romans had roads for fairly rapid travel; but they had no means for the rapid distribution of political news. The great bulk of the citizens, owing to their distance from the center of information, had no inkling of what was going on in Rome. They had no *inkling*, because they had no *ink*. No printed bulletins. A widespread democracy can persist only where there is a widespread ventilation of public opinions and public interests through a public press. In the latter days of the Roman Republic the average citizen, especially outside of Rome, was ignorant not only of political issues but of political personalities. Most of the time they were ignorant even of the dates on which elections were to be held.

The result was the gradual concentration of political power within the hands of a few gangsters—some historians still dignify them with the name of "statesmen"—Marius, Sulla, Pompey, Caesar, Cassius, Antony and Augustus. These men slugged it out and clubbed it out amongst their immediate henchmen; and in the ensuing turmoil—they called those uncivil butcheries "civil wars"—they killed the Republic and set up an empire in its place.

### *The Roman Empire*

The Roman emperors had a devilish philosophy for the enforcement and the sanctification of their iniquities. This philosophy, first outlined by Aristotle in his political discussion of tyranny, is somewhat as follows: A tyrant must liquidate all possible rivals—especially those who have merit—by legal execution if possible, by

illegal assassination if necessary. He must forbid all public discussions and close all public institutions where any criticism of his power is likely to arise. He must keep men from becoming too friendly toward one another—"for plots are hatched in the meeting of friends." And he must see to it that no man be allowed to enjoy too great a degree of privacy. For there's no telling what a man may think when left alone.

Furthermore, the tyrant must surround himself with spies—preferably female. A clever woman can worm many a secret out of a man. And he must sow quarrels among his subjects, to keep them so busy finding fault with one another they will have no time to find fault with their king. But, above all, he must make war, and again and again war, "in order that his subjects may be kept always out of mischief and find themselves always in want of a leader."

All these precepts the Roman emperors kept to the letter. And, also, another precept which they considered as of the utmost importance—to insist upon their divine right and to identify the worship of the emperor with the worship of God. For they felt that they could best insure their safety by impressing their subjects with a fear of divine displeasure against disloyalty toward the king.

And thus the Roman kings came to be known as god-emperors. When they ascended the throne, they were believed to have made a mystical ascent into heaven. But, concerned with their false divinity, they did nothing whatsoever to develop their humanity. The twelve Caesars were as arrant a dozen of scoundrels as the world has ever seen. Augustus slaughtered a large body of prisoners on the altar "as a present to his fellow gods." Tiberius—nicknamed *Biberius* (drunkard)—"was intoxicated with wine and with blood." His chief sport was to see men hurled down to their death from a precipice a thousand feet high. Caligula cudgelled men to death at the circus if they shouted too loudly "for his delicate royal ears." When he appeared in public, he held his ear cocked toward heaven "in conversation with my brother Jupiter." Claudius introduced a new "stunt" in the gladiatorial shows—a naval battle with real ships in which 19,000 prisoners fought for their lives before the Roman populace. The "show" was not ended until the greater number of the prisoners had been slain. Nero, to amuse himself, set fire to his city, fiddled while it burned, and then threw the



Christians to the lions on the charge that it was they who had started the fire.

These were but a few of the imperial atrocities in Rome. Indeed, almost the entire history of the Roman empire is a story of lootings and aggressions, of thefts and treacheries and murders and lusts. The emperors "respected wealth, despised science," and distrusted everybody. With all their pretensions to divinity, they utterly disregarded "that subtle thing, the soul of the empire." They did nothing to inspire their subjects with a political consciousness—a feeling of belonging *to*, and sharing *in*, the concerns of the state. And, with all their efforts to safeguard themselves, the Roman emperors were among the unsafest of men. The greater number of them died by the assassin's hand.

### *The Political Views of the Early Christians*

The early Christian Church was a state within several other states. It was an attempt to unite the world socially, spiritually, and politically. Saint Augustine's *City of God* was a model for the Commonwealth of Man. This commonwealth was to be organized into a universal "divine nation"—a Christian Republic under the guidance of the Church.

It was "the union and discipline of the Christian Republic" which, in the opinion of Edward Gibbon, was largely responsible for the triumph of Christianity. For the members of the Church possessed not only a spiritual zeal but a political unanimity that gave them the influence of a powerful "pressure group." Realizing this influential power of Christianity, Constantine adopted it as an ally and perpetuated it as the official religion of the Roman Empire. Through the solidarity of the Christians—for their faith had spread to every part of Europe—Constantine hoped to hold together his rotting empire. But the empire kept rotting away through its own aggressiveness. Its best young men had been killed off in the wars. Its population had been further decimated by a long succession of plagues which swept over the empire as a result of the wars. The Romans had sowed the seeds of bloodshed and they were now reaping the harvest of death. Many bulky volumes have been written about the possible causes of the Roman downfall. Historians

have tried to fix the exact date upon which the Roman Empire began to decline. Yet the whole question, it seems to me, is very simple. The Roman Empire began to decay the moment it entered upon a career of internal oppression and external conquest. The emperors based their power upon the false philosophy of violence. They forgot that violence *begets* violence. Having relied upon the sword, their government perished by the sword. Rome had taught the barbarian nations how to kill; and now the barbarian nations turned around and killed Rome.

And so the Roman Empire, addicted to the philosophy of war, died a comparatively early death. But the idea of the Christian Commonwealth, inspired by the philosophy of peace, lived on.

This idea of the Christian Commonwealth is the ecclesiastical offspring of Plato's Republic. It is to be a government of the elect for the perpetuation of human happiness. Its actual embodiment on earth is impossible. For perfection is reserved for heaven. But the perfection of heaven can inspire the imperfect creatures of the earth to nobler endeavors and greater hopes.

And the agency for this inspiration, said Augustine, is the Church. For the Church alone possesses "a most certain knowledge of the things it apprehends."

Hence the temporal governments of the earth must take their guidance from the Church as the intermediary between them and the Eternal Government of Heaven. This doctrine of the dependence of the State upon the Church was to dominate the politics of Europe for several hundred years. The ideal purpose of this domination, whatever may have been its material consequences, was to establish a "divinely ordained" council for a terrestrial league of nations—a common Brotherhood of Man under the vigilant Fatherhood of God.

### *Dante's Ideas on the Church and the State*

Strangely enough, it was the epic poet of Catholicism who struck the first blow against the predominance of the Church over the State. He began, in his treatise on politics, *De Monarchia*, by agreeing with the Christian idea of a world united under one government. The final goal of man, said Dante, is the full development

of his nature toward the establishment of universal peace. But at this point he departed from the idea of the Christian Commonwealth. In the development of society toward the objective of universal peace, he declared, there must be a "unity of direction" to reflect the will of the "Supreme Divine Unity." The heavens are united into a single concordant motion under One God. So, too, must men be united into a single harmonious loyalty under one king.

And the king must be independent of any power on earth, whether temporal or spiritual. For any royal dependence on such power, said Dante, is repugnant to nature and therefore contrary to the will of God. When Jesus bestowed upon Peter the power to loose and bind, he distinctly confined this power to heavenly things and not to earthly politics. Let the Pope be supreme in the spiritual things of heaven, and let the King be sovereign in the material politics of the earth. But let neither of them interfere with the prerogatives of the other. "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's." This, declared Dante, was the expressed purpose of Jesus, of Paul, and even of the angel who appeared to Paul. It was clearly the intention of God, when he made the body and the spirit of man, to establish two supreme authorities for his guidance—the one temporal and the other spiritual. Each of them is to be unhampered in his own sphere, and both of them are to be answerable only to God.

Stripped of its theological argument, the political vision of Dante was aimed at the complete separation of the State from the Church. But both of them were to act independently toward a common aim—a world organization for the development of the peace and the prosperity and the happiness of mankind.

Yet there was one blind spot in this vision—Dante's insistence upon monarchy as the ideal form of government. The monarchs in Dante's day, like most of the monarchs in any other day, were interested not in peace but in plunder. "Master," said the Third Fisherman to the First Fisherman in *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*, "I marvel how the fishes live in the sea." "Why, as men do a-land," replied the First Fisherman. "The great ones eat up the little ones."

*Machiavelli's Perversion of the State*

In Machiavelli we find the frankest and the most brutal analysis of the selfishness, audacity, cunning, deception, treachery, malevolence, cynicism, hatred and lust that were "necessary" for the making of an "expert" in prince-craft. Exiled for "backing the wrong horse" in a rowdy race for power, he whiled away his time—like some of the Nazis under Hitler—writing salacious stories and political tracts. He had faith neither in God nor in man. His one political credo was that the prince is above the obligations of the common man. And so he discarded the Sermon on the Mount—"the manual for slaves"—and prepared for the masters a Sermon of the Sword.

This diabolical bible of Machiavelli may be condensed into a creed of ten savage commandments:

1. Look out for your own interests.
2. Honor nobody but yourself.
3. Do evil, but pretend to do good.
4. Covet, and get, whatever you can.
5. Be miserly.
6. Be brutal.
7. Cheat whenever you get the chance.
8. Kill your enemies and, if necessary, your friends.
9. Use force, rather than kindness, in dealing with other people.
10. Concentrate all your efforts on war.

Let us examine each of these commandments in turn.

1. *Look out for your own interests.* Machiavelli was politically as well as morally blind. He failed to see the world as a unit. Humanity, to him, was not a closely-knit family of brothers, but a scattered horde of brutes and simpletons. And he believed that it was the business of the brutes to use the simpletons for their own ends. The best way to use them, he thought, was to oppress them. For—according to the laws of the jungle—if you do not oppress others, others will oppress you. Might is right. Therefore, said Machiavelli, the strong must assert their strength and make laws that will protect them against the rebelliousness of the weak.

The duty of the weak is to serve the strong, and the duty of the strong is to serve themselves.

2. *Honor nobody but yourself.* "He who is the cause of another man's greatness," wrote Machiavelli, "is himself undone." Encourage the interests of others only in so far as you can exploit them for your own interests. But the moment another man becomes popular, get him out of the way. For he who aspires to mastery can afford to have no rivals. A successful state, in the opinion of Machiavelli, should have but a single master. All the rest must be slaves. A prince should receive, but not confer, benefits.

3. *Do evil, but pretend to do good.* Machiavelli sincerely believed in the value of insincerity. He frankly advised the princes never to be frank. To be good, he said, is harmful; but to *appear* to be good is useful. "He who proposes to himself to act up to a perfect standard of goodness among all men alike, will be ruined among so many who are not good." In order to preserve his power and his plunder it is often necessary, said Machiavelli, for the prince to act in opposition to justice, charity, humanity, and good faith. Yet his subjects must not be aware of all this. They must be fooled into thinking that their prince is noble, compassionate, pious, and just. In other words, the successful ruler of men should make his subjects believe that he is protecting them at the very moment when he is crushing them. "Let mercy be on your tongue, and evil in your heart."

4. *Covet, and get, whatever you can.* The prince, in the savage philosophy of Machiavelli, should consider nothing but his own desires. He should have no regard for the rights of others. Plunder all you can, he said, and silence those who make complaints. But try to appear liberal. Don't go too far in your avarice—not because such a procedure would be wrong, but because it would be dangerous. Step on the worm, but caress it with the hand while you crush it under the heel. Otherwise it will turn. And, added Machiavelli, it is better if the "crushed worm" is a foreigner. For the foreigners in your midst will be too weak to retaliate. But if you tax your own citizens beyond their endurance, they may unite in their anger and overpower you. In other words, rob the weak and beware of the strong.

5. *Be miserly.* Machiavelli continues his savage political philosophy with the admonition that the prince should save his own money and spend the money of other people. It is unwise for the ruler to be too prodigal toward his subjects. At first, to be sure, he will gain a reputation for generosity. But before long his funds will be exhausted, and then he will be obliged to increase the taxes of his people in order to replenish his coffers. In this way the liberal prince is always ruined in the end—that is, if he is liberal with the money raised in his own country. “What injures you is to give away what is your own.” But with money plundered from other countries, through aggressive war, it is well for the prince to be as lavish as possible. For in this way his subjects will not only praise him for his entertainments, but they will fight for him in order that he may continue these entertainments.

6. *Be brutal.* It is the main business of the prince to enslave his people. And therefore he can never afford to be gentle. Machiavelli points out that Caesar Borgia, the Italian prince who surpassed all the other contemporary princes in cruelty, surpassed them also in glory. (But Machiavelli fails to point out that the glory of Caesar Borgia finally *collapsed* because of his cruelty.) Only a brute, declares Machiavelli, can succeed as a king. Lovers of justice, enemies of cruelty, lenient and humane emperors, said Machiavelli, come to a bad end. Goodness never pays. Honesty is the worst politics. A prince, in order to retain the loyalty of his subjects and the obedience of his soldiers, should stifle the man within him and develop the beast.

7. *Cheat whenever you get the chance.* Machiavelli insists again and again that the ruler, in order to crush his competitors, must turn into a murderer, a liar and a thief. He tells his prince to cultivate the ferociousness of the lion and the cunning of the fox. “He who has best known to play the fox, has had the best success.” Force, he maintains, is greater than justice, and fraud more powerful than truth. Do not, he advises his prince, ever bother about keeping your word, for nobody else does. “If all men were good, this would not be good advice; but since they are wicked and do not keep faith with you, you in return need not keep faith with them.” It is easy, he declares, for a ruler to break his promise. “No prince need ever be at a loss for plausible reasons to cloak a breach

of faith." For most men are stupid. *Mundus vult decipi*—the world is always ready to be fleeced.

8. *Kill your enemies and, if necessary, your friends.* The age in which Machiavelli lived was almost devoid of humanity. Among the leading sports of the sixteenth century were the hunting of animals and the burning of heretics. One of the emperors of that period, desiring to study the digestive process of food in the human body, had two living men dissected in his presence just as a medical student might dissect a couple of frogs. Centuries of almost continual warfare had hardened the feelings and cheapened the lives of men. Murder was but an incident, and the betrayal of a friend an accepted rule, in the game of life as played in those days. Machiavelli's aristocratic readers, therefore, were perfectly able to follow his argument, and quite ready to accept the next link in the chain of his diabolical logic.

9. *Use force, rather than kindness, in dealing with other people.* Machiavelli set it down as a general rule that it is better to be feared than to be loved. When you have driven a rival prince out of his possessions, make a thorough job of it and destroy the entire root of his family. Otherwise some of his relatives will spring up to avenge the wrong you have done him. An ambitious man cannot afford to be half cruel and half kind. You must either be an absolute cad, or else you must give up your ambition. Yet there must be a method, even though there is no measure, to your cruelty. When you have seized a state, or robbed a man, you must inflict all your injuries at once, so that they will soon be forgotten. On the other hand, if you ever *must* confer benefits, confer them little by little, so that they will long be remembered. But still better, try to avoid conferring benefits altogether. For a tyrant should maintain himself by force, and not by good will.

And this brings us to the last, and from the standpoint of the dictator, the most important, of Machiavelli's commandments:

10. *Concentrate all your efforts on war.* War is to be the chief business of the Machiavellian superbrute. A prince, writes Machiavelli, should devote himself exclusively to the art of killing. "For war is the sole occupation expected of a ruler." A prince ought never to allow his attention to be diverted from military pursuits. In time of peace, he should always prepare himself for war. His

conversation, his studies, his games, his reading, his most serious reflections, should be centered on the one supreme problem—how to defeat his fellowmen.

In the Machiavellian state, all roads lead to war. And to this very day the world is being crushed between the throes of the last war and the threats of the new war. For altogether too many countries are governed—or rather misgoverned—by the disciples of Machiavelli. In our dealings as between man and man, we have made some progress toward a decent code of ethics. But in our dealings as between nation and nation, we still rely upon imperialistic selfishness, savage exploitation, and diplomatic fraud. In our international relations we not only follow, but admire, the brutality of Machiavelli.

And yet, as the more enlightened statesmen here and there are beginning to realize, Machiavelli was not only ethically obtuse, but socially stupid and politically blind. Throughout history the aggressive nations have invariably fought themselves to death. As for the pretentious princes, the curtain of their strutting lives has generally rung down upon the flash of a dagger. The gods, observed an ancient Greek poet, detest a braggart. Of all professions in the world, despotism is the riskiest insurance against a violent death. It is a historic truism that over-ambition almost always leads to self-destruction.

### *Hobbes on Absolute Royalty*

Somewhat less brutal but no less despotic than the theory of Machiavelli was the political philosophy of Thomas Hobbes. An out-and-out materialist, Hobbes looked upon man as an artificial machine and upon the state as an artificial man to be governed by an absolute artificial soul or king. In their original state, declared Hobbes, men are equal—that is, possessed of a life that is equally “nasty, brutish, and short.” For in primitive society there is no property, no justice or injustice, but only an incessant war in which every man fights against every other man.

In order to escape from this evil, men combine into communities—preferably under a single central authority. The purpose of this combination is to prevent war between individuals (but not



between states). And the covenant that binds men together, asserted Hobbes, can be enforced only by one man. For, said Hobbes, where there is division of power, there is bound to be anarchy.

The covenant, therefore, is made by the people to obey their king—a sort of voluntary agreement to lifelong slavery. And the king is to enforce this covenant with the sword. “Covenants without the sword are but words.”

The king’s power, said Hobbes, must be unlimited. He must censor all thought, regulate all religion, scrutinize every transaction, suppress every rebellion. He must create and regulate the laws of property; for all property belongs, in the final analysis, to the king.

The king, in short, must be a despot. It is sheer nonsense, declared Hobbes, to differentiate between a king and a tyrant. “A tyrant is merely a king whom you happen to dislike.” But, whether or not the subjects dislike their king, they have no rights against him. Their entire life is answerable to his will. Any expression of disapproval against a royal act, even when such disapproval is justified, should be drastically stopped. For dissatisfaction leads to dissension; and dissension, to revolution—a state of affairs, said Hobbes, far worse than despotism. (Hobbes forgot that it is not the *freedom* of speech, but its *suppression*, that is most likely to lead to explosive revolutions. Human anger, like steam, must have an outlet if it is to cool off.)

In the despotic government as advocated by Hobbes, there are to be no political parties or social organizations. Teachers, preachers, writers, economic leaders—all of them are to be regarded as the king’s ministers, the interpreters and the agents of his will.

And, said Hobbes, it should be an easy matter to teach people that obedience to the king is a divine duty. For—and here we see the atheist calling upon heaven to help him—is not the human mind prone to all sorts of religious beliefs? There should be special sermons in the churches, and special courses in the schools, designed to impress upon the subjects the necessity of obedience to the king.

And then Hobbes concludes his discussion with the hope that some king will see his “wisdom” and turn himself into a despot. Some of the kings—like Charles I in England and Louis XVI in France—took his advice and lost their heads.

And the philosopher was disappointed in another of his hopes—that some king would repay his zeal with a substantial reward. Charles II awarded him a pension of £100 (about \$500) a year. But —“a king has no need to keep his word”—the pension was never paid.

*The Father of Modern Democracy—John Locke*

Hobbes had asserted the divine right of the king. But Locke declared the human right of the community. Like Hobbes, he believed that government had grown out of the natural state of man. But this natural state was not, as Hobbes had expressed it, “nasty, brutish, and short.” On the contrary, it was “a state of perfect freedom . . . within the bounds of the law of nature.” In this primitive equality of existence, said Locke, all men born to “the same advantages and to the use of the same faculties” enjoyed life “one amongst another without subordination or subjection.”

This natural state of man, observed Locke, is a state of liberty, but not of license. “The state of nature has a law of nature to govern it, which obliges every one: and reason, which is that law, teaches all mankind, who will but consult it, that being all equal and independent, no one ought to harm another in his life, health, liberty, or possessions.”

To this original state there was one objection. Every man, since he was his own defender, had to be his own judge. To overcome this difficulty, men united into commonwealths, and put themselves under government, so that the interests of one might not conflict with the welfare of all.

Government, therefore, is not a compact between sovereign and subject, but a trust between man and man. The ultimate supreme power is not vested in the scepter of the king; it remains in the hands of the people. “The community at large,” writes Bosanquet in explanation of Locke’s theory, “may withdraw the trust if its conditions are violated.”

The rights of the individual, therefore, are to be *protected* rather than *restricted* by the state. The king has neither the divine authority nor the moral justification to set himself up as his brother’s keeper. All men are equal in the eyes of God, and must be so regarded under the political laws of the government. “Politi-

cal power I take to be the right of making laws, and of employing the force of the community in the execution of such laws . . . for the public good." Kings, however, make laws and enforce them only for their own advantage. And so it is the height of folly, asserts Locke, for men to rely upon kings in order to protect themselves against one another. It is as if "they protected themselves against polecats and foxes but are content, nay think it safety, to be devoured by lions."

The only safety, then, is for men to unite themselves into governments based upon *the consent of the majority*. Such governments are to function *for* the people, and their expenses are to be borne *by* the people. But the taxes must be raised only with the consent of the majority. In other words, no taxation without representation.

This sort of government by consent of the majority, said Locke, should have freedom of speech, of thought, of election, and of religious worship. And, in order that it may be prevented from becoming too arbitrary, this democratic government should be regulated by a system of checks and balances. In other words, the government should be divided into three distinct branches—the legislative, the executive, and the judicial. And of these three branches, the legislative should be supreme.

But what if the various branches conflict? What if the executive, for example, fails to summon the legislative to exercise its function—as happened when King Charles (from 1628 to 1640) attempted to rule without Parliament? In such an event, said Locke, the people have the right and even the *duty* to prevent such usurpation—by force, if necessary. This prerogative of the people, however, must be used with the utmost care. "Force is to be opposed to nothing but unjust and unlawful force." A democratic people must never be aggressive; but it must be ever on the alert for its defense.

Such, in brief, is Locke's political philosophy as regards the government of individual nations. The best form of national government, he believes, is a social contract between man and man as a safeguard against the "original state" in which everybody was his own judge. But this original state of uncoordinated judgment still exists as between nation and nation. The day of real progress, observes Locke, will arise when nations as well as men are united in a social contract of political interdependence. The trend of

human freedom is from national to international democracy—from the cessation of duels among individuals to the abolition of wars among states.

### *Rousseau's Social Contract*

Rousseau, a philosopher of the heart rather than of the head, carried the democratic idea to an impractical extreme. For thirty-three years he devoted himself to a chambermaid—without benefit of clergy—had five children by her, and gave them all to the Foundling Hospital. This woman of his “democratic choosing” was ugly, ignorant, and uncouth. She could neither read nor write; she didn’t know the names of the months; and she was equally stupid in the counting of money and the cooking of meals. Yet she was quite able to abuse him, even to beat him when she was drunk, and to accept the attentions of peddlers and teamsters and stable boys. When his friends asked him to explain the reason for his strange infatuation, he shrugged his shoulders. “What can I do? She is God’s creature and so much in need of pity!” Rousseau never felt at home in the presence of the great. “My place is with the oppressed and the dispossessed.”

For all men, even the lowliest, are angels fallen into evil ways. “Man is naturally good,” he wrote, “and it is only through his institutions that he is made bad.” And worst of all institutions is the possession of private property. “The first man who, having enclosed a piece of land, bethought himself of saying, ‘this is mine,’ and found people simple enough to believe him, was the real founder of social inequality.”

The purpose of government, therefore, is to *uncivilize* man—to bring him back to his natural state of primitive equality.

Rousseau wrote a book on this subject—*The Inequality of Civilization*—and sent it to Voltaire. “I have received your accusation against mankind,” replied Voltaire, “and I thank you for it. Never was such human cleverness employed to prove human stupidity. One longs, in reading your book, to walk on all fours. But as I have lost that habit for more than sixty years, I am sorry that it is now impossible for me to resume it. Nor can I embark in search of the savages of Canada, because the maladies to which I am condemned render me dependent upon a European surgeon . . . and

because the example of our actions has made the Canadian savages nearly as bad as ourselves."

But the flippancy of Voltaire didn't frighten Rousseau from developing his idea about the evils of society. The evils were there, even if his remedy might prove to be inadequate.

And yet this remedy, if not carried to excess, *would* be adequate, believed Rousseau. The inequality of society, the uneven distribution of property and dispensation of justice, the slavish submission to "divine" right and aristocratic privilege—all these can be abolished if only we realize that "man is born free." The problem, then, is "to find a form of association which will defend and protect . . . the person and goods of each associate, and in which each, while uniting himself with all, may still obey himself alone, and remain as free as before." Rousseau calls the agreement for such a combination of free men the *Social Contract*. In this contract, "the rights are the same for all; and this being so, no one has any interest in making his own rights burdensome to others."

And so the Social Contract calls for a government based upon the free and friendly collaboration of the entire citizenry. "The government cannot impose upon its citizens any fetters"—or confer upon them any special privileges—"that are injurious to the community." Such a government will reflect the "general will" of the governed. It will be a corporation in which "every member will be received as an indivisible part of the whole." It will have no preferred stock for anybody, but a common stock of equal justice for all.

No preferred stock, and no preferred property. "The state, in relation to its members, is master of all their goods." For the state alone—that is, the collective will of the people—has the right to weave the threads of the individual interests into the pattern of the common good. *Vox populi, vox Dei*—the voice of the people is the voice of God.

But, concludes Rousseau on a pessimistic note, a government of political and economic equality such as outlined in the Social Contract is possible only for a *city of gods*. "So perfect a government is not for men."

Nor, apparently, was so daring a book palatable for men. When the *Social Contract* was published, an avalanche of fury descended

upon Rousseau's head. For it undermined the sanctions not only for the divine right of royalty but also for the private ownership of property. The French king ordered his arrest. He escaped to Geneva, where the Democratic Council burned his book and threatened his life. He took refuge in Germany, where an angry mob almost lynched him. He fled to England, where only one man—the philosopher David Hume—took him into his affection. By this time, however, Rousseau's suffering had affected his mind. He was tormented by a persecution mania, and he suspected that Hume was plotting to poison him. "Every man hates me because of my love for mankind."

Finally his fear of being murdered drove him to commit suicide. "Rousseau," said Hume, "only *felt* during the whole course of his life . . . His sensibility rose to a pitch beyond what I have seen any example of . . . He was like a man stripped not only of his clothes, but of his skin, and turned out in this situation to combat with the rude and boisterous elements."

### *From Politics to Peace—Immanuel Kant*

At the outbreak of the French Revolution, Kant wrote enthusiastically: "Now I can say like Simeon, 'Lord, let thy servant depart in peace; for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation.'" Having witnessed the birth of the United States of America a few years earlier, he now believed in the imminent birth of a United States of Europe. It was only in such a union, he said, that there would be any hope for universal peace. When men formed themselves into societies, there was an end to individual strife. When societies combine themselves into an international sociability, there will be an end to war between nations. The same law holds true of the individual and of the race. At present, "any one state must expect from any other the same sort of evils as formerly oppressed individuals and compelled them to enter into a civil union regulated by law." But the tendency for states, as for individuals, said Kant, is toward less competition and greater coöperation. "The history of the human race, viewed as a whole, may be regarded as the realization of a hidden plan of nature to bring about a political consti-

tution" which will unite all the states in a common endeavor "to develop fully the capacities of mankind."

In Kant's day the attitude of nation to nation, especially of the stronger to the weaker nations, was that of a jungle of snarling beasts. Every discovery of a new land—"America, the black regions of Africa, the Spice Islands, the Cape of Good Hope"—served only as an invitation to new plunder. "The injustice inflicted by the so-called 'civilized' countries in their first contact with foreign lands and peoples fills us with horror." The original inhabitants of these newly discovered countries "are reckoned as nothing." And the pity of it was that the barbarian aggressors were not aware of their barbarism. "These aggressive nations . . . make a great ado about their piety, and . . . while drinking up iniquity like water, would have themselves regarded as the very elect of the orthodox faith."

This state of international plunder—euphemistically called imperial expansion—was due to "the oligarchic governments of the wealthy minority." For the rich alone are the beneficiaries of the everlasting scramble for new conquests. And thus, as the first principle of our endeavor toward universal peace, declared Kant, we must insist upon the following condition: "The civil constitution of every state shall be republican, and war shall not be declared except by a plebiscite of all the citizens." At present, it is the many who fight the wars they never make, and the few who make the wars they never fight. The rulers "go to war"—what an ironic expression—because they know that their subjects will do the going while they themselves stay at home. "The rulers—that is, the owners of the state—need not in the least suffer personally by war, nor have they to sacrifice the pleasures of the table (no rationing for rulers), nor their pleasant palaces, nor the thrilling excitement of the chase. They can therefore resort to war upon the flimsiest pretense, as if it were but a hunting expedition." It is such fun to hunt men instead of beasts—especially when the subjects run the risk, and the rulers enjoy the spoils. As for the willingness of the people to die for the enrichment of their rulers, there are always plenty of diplomats and propagandists "who will sell their services" and inflame their fellows with a "holy" enthusiasm for the unholy of wars.

Let us, therefore, said Kant, revolutionize the human race into an enthusiasm for *peace*, through the establishment of a world confederacy of free republics. It is only then that "every man will be respected as an end in himself" instead of being criminally compelled, as he is today, "to be used as a means for another man's gain." And then, at last, the words *Eternal Peace* will be inscribed no longer in satire upon the entrance to a graveyard, but in syllables of living sincerity upon every human heart.

### *The "Philosophical Radical"—Jeremy Bentham*

Bentham was the first among modern philosophers to place women upon a political equality with men. In Plato's Republic this equality was to be fully recognized. But after Plato it was completely forgotten for over two thousand years. Even Rousseau neglected to include the feminine will in the general will that was to govern mankind. But Bentham revived the Platonic ideal of equal rights and an equal vote for women.

This radical idea—Bentham was sixty years old when he advanced it—was based upon another of his revolutionary ideas, the principle of "the greatest happiness for the greatest number." The only good in the world, he said, is happiness; and the only evil, pain. Every man, whatever his ambition, pursues his own happiness. And it is the business of the legislator so to correlate the individual pursuits that the happiness of one is in harmony with the happiness of all.

This correlation, observed Bentham, may interfere with the individual's liberty—especially his liberty to injure others in order to help himself. But what we want even more than liberty is security. Above all, security from war. "Wars and storms are best to read of, but peace and calms are better to endure."

The state, therefore, must submit the desires of the individual to the "arbitrament of reason." And this ideal of reason in the realm of politics can function most effectively in democratic countries. For in such countries the free exercise of the public vote—"and this should include women as well as men"—will compel the rich man's greed to yield to the poor man's need. Also, the free expression of public opinion will discourage imperialism, aggression, and war. For almost all the modern wars, believed Bentham



along with Kant, resulted from the oligarchic "folly" of seeking new colonies for greater wealth.

Let us not, he said, be deluded by these oligarchs and their hired orators. Their sentimental maxims are merely apologies for their predatory interests. When they teach us the holiness of sacrifice, what they really mean is that it is holy for *us* to sacrifice ourselves for *them*. When they talk of the beauty of freedom, they mean that it is beautiful for *them* to be free to enslave *us*. But the best moral principle, and the wisest political government, is that which aims at an "equilibrium of interests." The private ambition must be subordinated to the public welfare. For the happiness of the public is to be the sole political, social and economic aim of the government.

And thus we see the gradual development of the modern democratic idea—from Locke to Bentham. The truly democratic government is to be representative of the will of the people; it is to have checks and balances; it is to protect the freedom of speech, of the press, and of religious worship; it is to dispense equal justice among all the citizens; it is to aim at the abolition of special privilege and (ultimately) of private property; it is to adhere to the principle of non-aggression among nations; it is to recognize the equal rights, based upon the universal suffrage, of all women as well as of all men; and it is to pave the way to the political, economic and social coöperation of the world.

From this worldwide idea of social democracy it is but a step to the international socialism of Karl Marx.

### *The Confederacy of Mankind—Karl Marx*

By his birth, his environment and his training, Karl Marx was a cosmopolitan. His native city (Trèves), though German, was a hotbed of radicalism under the influence of the French revolution. His ancestors had been Jewish rabbis, but his parents adopted Christianity when he was a child. Brought up as a commoner, he married a noblewoman. And educated as a philosopher, he tried his hand at journalism, and finally became interested in political economy as a result of his meeting with Engels, the manager of a British factory. And, through Engels, he met the workers and be-

came acquainted with their needs, their ideas, their sufferings and their hopes.

And throughout his own life he was compelled, as his rabbinical ancestors had learned from their prophets, to acquire wisdom through suffering. His "family of six," writes his biographer, Otto Ruhle, "was packed into two small rooms, not knowing from day to day whether they would get food on the next." Again and again, Marx "was obliged to stay in the house, for lack of a coat to go out in"—for his clothes had been pawned—"and he had no meat for dinner, as the butcher had refused further credit."

Poverty, privation, sickness, death. On Easter Day, 1852—Marx was 33 at the time—one of his children died. "Our little Francisca fell ill with severe bronchitis," writes her mother. "For three days the poor child struggled with death. She suffered so terribly. When it was over, her little body rested in the small back room, and we all came into the front room. At night, we lay down on the floor . . . The dear child's death happened at a time when we were in the direst need . . . A French refugee gave me two pounds. With this sum, I was able to buy the coffin in which my poor child now lies at peace. She had no cradle when she came into the world, and for a long time it was difficult to find a box for her last resting place."

In addition to all this suffering, Marx was kept constantly on the go, from exile to exile, for his revolutionary ideas. Rarely in history was a philosopher so adequately trained, through his own experience, to seek a wiser government for happier men.

And the government most conducive to the happiness of mankind, believed Karl Marx, is socialism. Not only is socialism the *wisest* government for the future, said Marx; it is the *inevitable* government. Whether we like it or not, the trend of history, the material needs of humanity, and the universal passion for justice, are all alike sweeping us toward the social democracy of the world. As Bosanquet puts it, "while statesmen are arguing, love and hunger are governing mankind."

Marx examines socialism impartially, like a philosopher. He does not champion it recklessly, like a crusader. "I do not mean to reform; I only wish to observe." It would be well, he said, if the social revolution came in his own day. But if not, let it come when it will. "But it *will* come."

For political government depends upon economic production and social distribution. This threefold activity of the state is the process of a threefold historical development—feudalism, capitalism, and socialism.

1. *Feudalism*, the government of the Agricultural Age, is (under various names but with a single objective) the administration of Land Lords. The rulers own the land as well as the workers who cultivate it. They keep for themselves the richest produce, and they throw the leftovers to the cultivators just as a man throws the leftovers of his dinner to a dog. The rulers alone are the masters. All the rest are slaves.

2. *Capitalism*, the government of the Industrial Age, is (also under various names but with a single objective) the administration of "Economic Royalists." That is, of manufacturers and bankers. These rulers, instead of owning the land, own the means of production and of distribution—and also the workers who produce and distribute. These owners, like their feudalist predecessors, keep the best for themselves and parcel out to the workers just enough to maintain them in "mechanical" repair. And thus in the Industrial Age, as well as in the Agricultural, the rulers are the only masters. All the rest are slaves—*wage slaves*.

3. *Socialism*, the government of the Coöperative Age, is the administration of a co-partnership of man for the welfare of mankind. In this government there are to be no possessors and no dispossessed, no masters and no slaves. In all former governments, poverty was recognized as the inevitable destiny of a submerged class. Under socialism, said Karl Marx, there will be no poverty, no hunger, no extortion, no exploitation, no war. (For war is generally the struggle of the *have-nots* against the *haves*.)

And all this, believed Marx, will come about through the abolition of private property in favor of the state ownership of land and capital. If the people own the means of production, there will be greater justice in the process of distribution. Under such a government—and in order to function properly, observed Marx, it should be international rather than national—the political, social and economic inequalities of the past will be resolved into a complete, understanding, and peaceful harmony.

Yet the transition to this harmony, prophesied Marx, will be a

period of chaos—"fifteen, twenty, perhaps thirty years of civil strife and foreign wars." Marx had an uncanny way of seeing into the future. But out of the welter of bloodshed and suffering will come the day "when the political power is vested in the hands of the workers of the world." And only then will the world know the meaning of democracy. For the only *true* democracy is *social* democracy.

### *Government by Organized Intelligence—John Dewey*

True democracy, said John Dewey, is "a life of free and enriching communion." The communion of a people educated to a knowledge of their own rights and duties, and to an understanding of the rights and the duties of their fellows. In other words, it is government by organized intelligence. It is our business to introduce into government a practice already established in science. "In spite of science's dependence for its development upon the free initiative, invention, and enterprise of individual inquirers, the authority of science issues from and is based upon collective activity, coöperatively organized." The same should hold true of social and of political as well as of scientific development. We should learn to coördinate our individual goods into coöperative goods. We should have free communication as a guide to communal living.

The best means for realizing such communication, said Dewey, is democracy as we know it today. For democracy compels "public discussion . . . in arriving at political decisions." The days are past "when government can be carried on successfully without . . . ascertaining the wishes of the governed."

Democracy, the form of government based upon the wishes of the governed, is more than a political philosophy. It is a way of life. For it is based upon "the participation of every mature human being in formation of the values that regulate . . . the development of human personality . . . and . . . the living of men together." Of all the governments attempted thus far, maintains Dewey, democracy is the most likely to conduce to the universal well-being of mankind. And the reason for this is very simple: "No man or limited set of men is wise enough or good enough to rule others

without their consent." The wisdom of mankind is greater than that of any one man. The individuals of the submerged mass may know less than the individuals at the top—an argument often employed in behalf of the undemocratic forms of government. But there is one thing that the rank and file of the people are in a position to know better than anybody else—"and that is, where the shoe pinches."

The composite vote of the people, therefore, is necessary for the understanding of their composite needs. Their "pooled and coöperative" experience alone is the proper source of information for their representative government. It is a false philosophy that a few favored men are endowed, either by birth or by wealth or even by education, with a superior ability to regulate the lives of their fellowmen. Everybody best knows his own needs. And it is only through the free expression of these needs that some sort of coördinated union can be elaborated.

A union coördinated upon the basis of human equality. This, observes Professor Dewey, does not mean that men have equal endowments. But it does mean that they have equal rights to impartial treatment under the law, and to equal votes and opportunities even though they may not be equally wise in the exercise of their votes or equally skilful in the grasping of their opportunities.

And there is another basic reason for the democratic ideal of government. This reason is the growing faith of humanity that every individual has something important to contribute to the welfare of all. It is the pooled strength of the individuals that makes for a united power, and the pooled intelligence of the individuals that makes for a united wisdom.

And thus democracy is the expression of an organized "free intelligence" for the functioning of an organized "freedom of action." This idea of freedom is not "the right of each individual to *do* as he pleases," but his right to *say* as he pleases—so that his vote may become an important part of the composite voice, and his interest an integrated element in the coöperative interests of all.

This sort of democracy is not as yet an accomplished fact; it is a goal toward which we are moving. What we have in most of the so-called democracies today is (a measure of) organized intelligence on a political, but not on a social or on an economic level. We

have public votes but private wealth, equality on election day but inequality on all the other days, organized production but chaotic distribution, too much for the few but too little for the many, reckless competition among individuals and pitiable submission among the masses. What we need if we are to realize our democratic ideal is "an intelligence, a sentiment and an individuality of a new type."

Today, declares Dewey, even the so-called "rugged individuals" are drifting aimlessly they know not whither. They may call themselves captains of industry, but they are not "captains of their own souls." They are unhappy because deep down in their hearts they know that there is no direction to their endeavors—that the fundamental human desire is not for private profit but for social warmth.

And so we have a society of "lost individuals." Our economic leaders have no emotional outlet for their spiritual energies. They are trying to "refind" themselves. They are blindly seeking to transform their economic individualism into a social and political collectivism. They want a government in which the mind—the only *creative* individuality in human existence—will find more important work to do than the monotonous multiplication of dollars and cents.

As for the rest of the public, they too are awaking from their submissive paralysis. Free speech, free education and a free press are beginning to produce their effect. The wage earners are no longer tied to their machines. They find the time to square their shoulders and to look around. Caliban in the coal mines, no less than Plato's philosopher in the cave, is preparing to have a look at the green earth under the sun. And to demand a share of its fruits. We are all moving, not toward a republic ruled by a philosopher-king, but toward a democracy governed by thoughtful men.

A *collective* democracy. A government which, far from *hampering* the individual, will help him to *expand* to his fullest mental, moral, political, social, and spiritual growth.

For a healthy society, a healthy state, a healthy world, is based upon the "friendly interactions" of all the people—the vital interplay of their private interests to produce a common storehouse of well-being. *The Coöperative Commonwealth*.

In such a government, based upon the mutual regard of all for one and of one for all, there will be no need of lost individuals. For

"if, in the long run, an individual remains lost, it is because he has chosen irresponsibility." On the other hand, the richest individual—and riches need not be counted in savings and stocks—will be the one with the deepest responsibility for social integration. Such a man will be the best citizen, and a model for all the other citizens, in the government of political freedom, social intelligence, financial coöperation, equal justice, and lasting peace. "Until that method . . . is adopted, we shall remain in a period of drift and unrest whose final outcome is likely to be force and counterforce, with temporary victory to the side possessed of the most machine guns."

### *The Three Stages of Political Evolution*

All the various systems of government, under whatever name—monarchy, aristocracy, oligarchy, tyranny, dictatorship, democracy, collective security—may be divided into three groups: the government of *dependence*; the government of *independence*; the government of *interdependence*. None of these groups has ever been static. All governments have been in a continual state of transition. Every system has had within it the seeds of another system; and the seeds keep germinating and growing *all the time*. No government, however absolute, is so stable that it remains the same for any great period. The form keeps developing, with the developing knowledge of the people, from day to day. One of the most astonishing statements ever made was the ignorant Nazi boast that their system would endure for a thousand years. It took but thirteen years for history to explode that boast.

Governments keep changing perpetually. But the *principles* of government remain unchanged. Men are either dependent, independent, or interdependent. And the growth of human society, through the growth of the human spirit, is from slavish dependence, through rebellious independence, to voluntary interdependence.

#### DEPENDENCE

Under the authoritarian system of government, the masses had no rights and but a single duty—unreasonable, unconditional and absolute obedience to the ruling power of the state. The head of

the state was the leader, the accuser, the judge, the executioner, the master and the god of the people. "Thou shalt have no other gods and no other masters before me." This absolute power, whether usurped by a king or by a minority, was based upon the erroneous assumption that nature has two kinds of offspring—children and stepchildren. In order to enforce this assumption upon the people, the rulers tried to enslave not only the bodies but the minds, the imaginations, and the emotions of their subjects.

Indeed, it was to the interest of the rulers—and of their apologists—to suppress the truth even within their *own* minds. To this day there are philosophers who advance the fallacious theory that *absolute* government is the *only* government possible for human society. "The dominion of an organized minority over the unorganized majority," writes Gaetano Mosca, "is inevitable . . . Those who have the will and, especially, the means to *force* their will upon others, will always take the lead over the others and command them." And a more recent writer, Pareto, makes the following cynical observation about the modern "humanitarian" trend toward democracy: "The intent of sincere humanitarians is to do good to society, just as the intent of the child who kills a bird by too much fondling is to do good to the bird."

In other words—assert the authoritarians—leave the stepchildren of nature alone in their misery. Don't spoil them with any false notion or sentimental affection. For they are *destined* to be slaves. The dependence of the unintegrated many upon the will of the integrated few is "one of the unchangeable principles of human existence."

#### INDEPENDENCE

But the authoritarians are wrong. The one unchangeable principle of human existence is the historical fact that humanity keeps changing. The masses as well as the classes have shown that they can integrate themselves into a political power. Nature has no stepchildren. All have a legitimate and equal right to her bounty. And little by little they are learning to *demand* the right. Humanity is constantly awaking to new ideas, new purposes, new wants. All history is a struggle between usurpation and revolution, authority



and freedom, dependence and independence, the mythical rights of the few and the actual rights of all.

It is not to be denied, of course, that men will endure authority up to a certain point. Their individual fear of rebellion, their conservative adherence to tradition, their indoctrination by false propaganda about "divine rights and sanctions"—propaganda, said Hitler, should be brief and repetitious, so that people will *understand* it and *remember* it—all these factors tend to prolong evil institutions. But always, in the depths of the human heart, there is the instinct for the light and the right. In the individual, as in society, there is a continual struggle between the conservative who wants to be left alone and the radical who is eager to go ahead. And in the course of history, it is the radical who comes out on top. For the radical, the man who strives at independence, is the instrument of human progress. If it were not for the universal urge to independence, we should all be cowering today under a dictator's lash.

The day of dictatorial government, by whatever name it may be called, seems to be dead in spite of the periodic efforts to revive it. Absolute rulers, observed Francis Thompson, are "the obsolete buttons on the coat-tails of government, which serve no purpose but to be continually coming off." The right to govern is no longer sanctioned by "divine command"; or by the accident of birth—for "pedigreed princes are but the descendants of unpedigreed pirates"; or by the possession of wealth—"there is no uglier form of government," said Cicero, "than that in which the richest are thought the best." Within a single generation the world has fought off successfully two attempts to stifle the independence of man. The human passion for freedom will not be stopped.

This passion for freedom had its modern birth—or, rather, *re-birth*—in the French Revolution which proclaimed the Rights of the Individual Man, and in the American Revolution which published the Declaration of National Independence. These two manifestos, the European and the American, were based—to quote Emery Reeves—"on the *Laws of Nature*, on certain inalienable rights, on equality, liberty, fraternity, and on life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

Freedom, happiness, equality, and the Brotherhood of Man—these are the political principles that keep luring us on, and keep

us hoping on. We *are* meant by nature to be free and friendly and equal in our human dignity and our human rights. "If I am not level with the lowest," wrote Edward Carpenter, "I am nothing." This is the real meaning of independence—the freedom of the lowliest individual to assert his self-respect and to seek his happiness as a man invited by his birthright to the common banquet of life. And what holds true of the lowliest individual holds equally true of the weakest nation.

Yet there is a limit to national as well as to individual independence. For absolute freedom leads to anarchy. The pursuit of happiness must not be allowed to degenerate into a free fight for all. There must be an *International Contract* among states as well as a *Social Contract* among men. And this contract must be not only *political*, but *economic* as well.

For man lives by bread and trade. This important fact was overlooked in 1919, when a few brave, blind men tried to set up a League of Nations organized upon a political but not upon an economic spirit of justice. When an individual robs another individual, he is outlawed and segregated until such time as he is able, in the opinion of society, to resume his life as an honest man. But when a nation robs another nation, we still lack the smoothly functioning political, and especially economic, machinery for outlawing and segregating her until she learns to behave as a civilized state.

Even among individuals we have plenty of unsocial activity, both legal and illegal. And this is due not to an insufficiency of police but to an insufficiency of vision. For we are still trying to advance under the banner of absolute independence. We fail to realize that absolute independence is impossible, either for the individual or for the state. No one man and no one nation can live without the good will and the helpful labor of other men and nations. This fact was painfully brought home to us during the last war, when neither America nor Russia nor Great Britain proved to be economically able to stand alone. Franklin's truism applies to nations as well as to individuals. If the nations do not get together into a single membership, they will be dismembered one by one. This truth is being realized at least among *some* of the delegates to the council of the United Nations. The definite trend of government is, from

nationalism to internationalism, from *independence* to *interdependence*.

#### INTERDEPENDENCE

We need, to use Professor Dewey's excellent phrase, "an interpenetration of interests"—a new kind of freedom "unlike that which the unconstrained economic liberty of individuals (and of nations) has produced and justified." We need, in other words, "a kind of individual (and national) freedom that is general and shared and that has the backing and guidance of socially organized . . . control."

And this new freedom—this interdependence of individuals and of nations—is somewhere around the bend, it would seem, in the political current of history. Absolute dependence has led to slavery; absolute independence, to chaos. But the order of the universe is neither a subjection nor a confusion. It is a *rhythmic correlation* between the parts and the whole. Man is slowly learning to adjust himself to the world—to the measured regularity that pulsates at the heart of things. The collective movement of the stars is a textbook for the collective life of mankind.

And it appears that Nature is not only a textbook but a teacher. She holds us by the hand and prompts us to see every new day under a new light. Human progress is the result of human peril. For man is a lazy animal. He advances only when some threatening danger, such as a catastrophe of the elements or an attack by an enemy impels him to choose between progress on the one hand and extinction on the other. The first great impetus to progress was the descent of the Ice Age in prehistoric times, when men learned to huddle together for protection and warmth. It was then that they got the first glimmerings of a social consciousness. And now we have had the latest great impetus to progress in the descent of the Atomic Bomb. This time it is the *nations* that must choose between life and death. They, too, must learn to huddle together for mutual protection. They must acquire an *international consciousness* if the life of man is not to be blotted out.

And if history teaches us anything, it teaches us that man possesses the instinct, in every catastrophic period, to struggle through—slowly, blunderingly, but *inevitably*—to the way of progress which

is the only way of life. Humanity will be saved through the collective security of the nations. The governments of the world will learn to organize their resources and their intelligence for their common use. We have seen the functioning of coöperative intelligence in the field of international science. We see it developing in the field of international economics. We are bound to see it emerging, before very long, in the field of international government.

For humanity is marching forward. The totalitarian, the fascist and the reactionary states are no indication of the trend of history. They are merely out of step. The uncoöperative state, like the uncoöperative individual, cannot exist in a world which is moving collectively ahead. Such an individual, such a state, will learn to move in step or drop by the wayside. All are for one when one is for all—but not otherwise. Men can live only by reciprocity. It has been tragically demonstrated in the last war that a single unsocial state, even a single unsocial individual, can be a menace to the entire world. Again and again this truth has been brought home to us. *Humanity is a living, integrated, interdependent organism. Man is a social animal.* When distances were great and travel was slow, the social units were segregated and small. But now that all the nations can be encircled almost in a day, the *social unit* is becoming a *world unit*. All mankind is one. *This* is the lesson that history has been patiently teaching us for many thousands of years.

And we are just beginning to learn the lesson. We are preparing slowly to formulate, as the logical outcome of a national Declaration of Independence, an international Declaration of Interdependence.

## V

# The Testament of Beauty — Esthetics

### *The Meaning of Beauty*

"Beauty is truth, truth beauty—that is all  
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know."

John Keats

THE sense of beauty serves a double purpose. It is an impulse toward the *creation* of life, and a means toward the *understanding* of life.

Beauty as a stimulus to creation excites the senses not only of man but of many other animals. When the bower-bird of Australia is ready to mate, he beautifies his nest with brushwood and carpets it with grass. And he adorns the borders with white pebbles, the walls with multi-colored plumage and red berries, and the entrance to the nuptial chamber with mussel-shells and glittering sand. A bed of beauty for the consummation of love. Nature has provided a spirit of elation as a prelude to the act of creation. "With the great majority of animals," writes Darwin, "the taste for the beautiful is confined, so far as we can judge, to the attractions of the opposite sex."

Beauty is the invitation to life—not only through the sense of sight, but through the other senses as well. The call of the lion in the jungle, the song of the crickets, the chorus of the frogs, the flight of the butterfly and the fragrance of the rose, the nestling of the sensitive snout against the softness of the furred body—all these are the instruments of nature, translated into beauty, for the transmission of the life-stream from the old channels into the new.

Beauty, then, is a translation—from indifference to desire, from desire to activity, from activity to creativity. "Beauty," said Stendhal,

"is a promise of pleasure." But it is much more than that. It is an urge to galvanize, *through pleasure*, the will to mate and to create.

A thing is beautiful because our desire—that is, our instinct for mating—makes it so. This desire for mating invests the drabest and the ugliest of creatures with color and allurements and grace. All things are made lovely through love. "Ask a toad what is beauty," wrote Remy De Gourmont, "and he will answer that it is his female, with two great round eyes coming out of her little head, her large flat mouth, her yellow belly and brown back."

Love, we are told, is blind. On the contrary, it is the most clear-sighted of all human passions. For it combines sight with imagination. It is useless for us to ask what it is that John Smith finds in "that horrid creature," Jennie Stout. "I find *beauty* in her," and, for him, the answer is fully justified. Samuel Johnson, we are told, married "the ugliest nanny-goat in London"—a woman twice his age who, even in her youthful days, had been "a horror to look at." Yet he was astonished when people snickered at his choice. "If only they could see my beautiful Tetty through *my eyes*!"

Everybody beholds beauty through his own eyes, stimulated by his own desire. To the native of Tahiti, a flat nose was the acme of loveliness; to the writer of the *Song of Songs*, the most beautiful nose was like "the tower of Lebanon." Richard Burton writes that when the Negro boys saw him on the African coast, they cried out: "Look at the white monkey!" And Thorndike tells of black savages who looked upon the white man's head as misshapen because it had not been pressed by a board into the semblance of a sugar loaf.

Every man to his taste. But all tastes lead, through individual conceptions of beauty, to the preservation of the species. This, then, is one of the two functions of beauty—the urge for living creatures to reproduce themselves and thus to insure the extension of life.

But there is another and—to man—even more important function of beauty. This function is not the *creation* but the *interpretation* of life. Beauty is the attunement between the heart of nature and the heart of man. There is a common denominator between the breathing of the tides, the circulation of the blood, and the cadence of a song. Beauty reveals truth. More than that—as Keats

well knew—beauty *is* truth. It consists in those flashes of revelation that point out to us the eternal unity through the visible diversity of things. Our human minds are like so many clouded mirrors that catch glimpses of the truth in a million apparently incongruous variations. Now and then, however, the mist lifts for the fraction of a second before a small part of the mirror of our minds, and a thing of beauty—a reminder of the truth—is born. “A child said, *What is the grass?*” writes Walt Whitman. And the poet replies: “I guess it is the handkerchief of the Lord, a scented gift and remembrancer designedly dropt . . . I guess it is a uniform hieroglyphic, and it means, *Sprouting alike in broad zones and in narrow zones, growing among black folks as among white . . . I give them the same, I receive them the same.*”

The grass, the flowers, the sunset, the sea; the rhythm of a symphony and the beating of the heart; the ripple of the fountain and the rippling laughter of a child; the syllables of a mother’s lullaby and the trembling tones of the violin. All these are but different accents of the universal language of beauty—different cadences of the selfsame reminder of God. “I give you the same, I receive you the same.”

For beauty is not only a *physical invitation* to life; it is also and especially a *spiritual confirmation* of life. Beauty is the *breath* of life, the vital principle of existence. It is the signpost to the ultimate goodness of the world. It is something beyond and above the testimony of the senses and of the scientific instruments that enable us to stretch our senses a little beyond the horizon. The ultimate meaning of beauty lies outside the province of tags and labels. “It may be quite possible,” writes John Ruskin, “to show the conditions in water and electricity which necessarily produce the craggy outline, the apparently self-contained silvery light, and the sulphurous blue shadow of a thunder cloud, and which separate these from the dawn of a summer morning. Similarly, it may be possible to show the necessities of structure which groove the fangs and depress the brow of the asp, and which distinguish the character of its head from that of the face of a young girl.” But these scientific observations do not explain the principle of beauty. Nor do the psychological theories about the relation of beauty to sex desire fully explain the principle. The meaning of beauty can be under-

stood only through the exercise of "the rightly-trained imagination." If we examine the world through the telescope of the imagination, declares Ruskin, we recognize in the difference between a thunder cloud and a golden dawn, between the fang of an asp and the smile of a young girl—"we recognize in these, and in such other relative aspects, the unity of teaching which impresses, alike on our senses and our conscience, the eternal difference between good and evil: and the rule, over the clouds of heaven and over the creatures in the earth, of the same Spirit which teaches to our own hearts the bitterness of death, and the strength of love."

This divine Spirit outside of us speaks to a divine spirit within us. And every human being, perhaps (thought Ruskin) every living creature, partakes of this spirit—this capacity for groping toward the truth through the avenue of beauty.

And in this groping of ours, through beauty to truth, we do not need all our senses. The beauty of the world, the pulsating rhythm of life, can reach us even through a minimum of sensations. Helen Keller observed that "you don't have to hear and you don't have to see the beautiful things of the world. You get to know them anyhow. You sort of *feel* your way to them." Through the superior sense of your intuition—"a sense which sees, hears, feels, all in one." Through the harmony within you that answers to the harmony without. "Often," writes Helen Keller, "I felt petals showered upon me by a passing breeze, and so I could imagine the sunset as a vast rose garden from which the petals had been shaken and were drifting through the sky." Petals of roses, clouds of the sunset, music of raindrops, whirling of stars—syllables of the epic poem of the universe. Curlicues of beautiful symmetry, pointing out to the children of the earth the symmetrical beauty of the heavens.

For beauty is unity, the organized rhythmical pattern of a living world.

### *The Beginning of Art*

The love of beauty is the beginning of art. For love is both an emotion and an action. Beauty is the appreciation and the creation of life, and art is the appreciation and the creation of beauty.

The artistic sense of beauty is almost as old as the human race. Maybe, if we thoroughly understood the past, we could say that



the artistic sense of beauty is *quite* as old as the human race. As far back as the intellect can record and the imagination can stretch, we find that the children of Father Heaven and of Mother Earth loved to re-create themselves by re-creating the image of the world they lived in. They painted, they danced, they sang, they spoke, they built, they modeled and they philosophized in response to an inner rhythm that answered the external rhythm of life. Among the earliest savages, the men began to paint their bodies—and the women followed suit—not only as an attraction to sex, but as an imitation of life. And the later adornment of the body—the introduction of clothes—was not so much a climatic necessity as an artistic luxury. Darwin writes that one day, out of pity for a shivering native of Tierra del Fuego, he gave him a red cloth to drape about his body. Whereupon the savage tore the cloth into several strips and handed them to his companions, who in turn tied them as ornaments around their arms and legs. Among the first articles of human clothing were pelts and feathers—impersonations of “our living brothers, the beasts and the birds.” A savage queen on the Congo, writes Will Durant, “wore a brass collar weighing twenty pounds.” The civilized lady on the Hudson wears a Persian lamb coat of almost equal weight. The universal love for adornment makes all women kin.

And thus, from the very beginning, the impression of beauty finds expression in art. Men paint their bodies; they embroider their clothes; they imitate the movements of nature with their dance, and the voices of nature with their chant; they develop their inarticulate chant into cadences and syllables and give birth to song and speech; they measure off their thoughts into symmetrical forms, and translate them into poetic rhythms and dramatic scenes; they weave their fingers in clay, and model figures and pottery; they weave them in reeds and make music; they carve trees and stones into columns to embellish their houses and their temples and their tombs; and they transform their fears and their beliefs and their instincts and their hopes into an integrated art of life.

The art of life is highly developed among the most primitive of savages. They develop a spirit of graciousness along with a sense of grace. Life to them is, to use the expression of Havelock Ellis,

"a dance." Describing the South Sea inhabitants of the Loyalty Islands, Emma Hadfield refers to their highly developed "instincts for beauty" in their social relationships. Feeding a hungry neighbor is to them as natural as feeding themselves. "What I do for you today, you will do for me tomorrow." At the public meetings, the lepers are required to be seated on a separate bench. But quite frequently a healthy woman will insist upon taking her place among them, "so as not to shame them in their loneliness."

Most interesting of all the arts practiced among these islanders is the art of war. These "savages" never attack without notice given several days ahead. Women and children are left unharmed. And, when several men are killed or wounded on one side, the hostilities are broken off and an indemnity is paid—not, however, by the vanquished to the conquerors, but by the conquerors to the vanquished. For those who have suffered defeat are most greatly in need of help.

The entire life of these savages in the Pacific—of all people everywhere—is founded upon our human sense of fitness, of interrelated harmony, of the rhythmic purpose of the universe as reflected in the rhythmic pulse of man.

### *Beauty and the East*

Beauty, like the sun, rises in the East. Among the earliest specimens of ancient art are the fragments of beauty, like broken bits of glass, that have come down to us from the valleys of the Tigris, the Euphrates, and the Nile. As far back as five thousand years ago, the Sumerians had learned to taper their doors and their drains into arches; to carve and to paint the walls of their temples; to inscribe their thoughts upon clay tablets—a library of 30,000 such tablets has been discovered at Tello; to inlay their furniture with ivory and marble and alabaster and gold; to enthrone their gods upon the mountaintops in images of stone; and to embellish their pantries with vases and their persons with jewels of exquisite workmanship.

Another of the countries that we can still see dimly across the centuries is ancient Egypt. Here, too, the spirit of beauty had an early development. Their wide horizons and their clear skies gave

the Egyptians a sense of gigantic symmetry which they translated into their art. Vast temples, immense statues, towering pyramids, lofty thoughts. And the sphinx—the riddle of the ages, the secret of philosophy, the symbol of man—half beast, half God, looking out upon the world unperturbed while the sands of the centuries keep piling around its feet. It seems as if the Egyptians wanted to say in their art: "Our life is for a day, but our thoughts are for eternity." Perhaps it was not the preponderance of size that the Egyptians craved, but rather the permanence of strength. They mummified their dead into "everlasting life," and they built for them imperishable tombs. Strong, luxurious, beautiful dwellings, these homes of the dead—ever so much stronger than the homes of the living. "For the dead are going to live in these stone houses forever." The Great Pyramid of Gizeh—"the Palace of the Kingly Spirits"—covers an area of thirteen acres, which is about three times the floor space occupied by the largest building in the world today.

There was the beauty of strength in the palaces of the dead kings, and in the temples of the living gods. Columns carved into the semblance of the papyrus plant—gigantic unfolding flowers of stone—the handiwork of millions of men covering a period of almost a thousand years, to the end that the image of beauty might be incorporated into the substance of art. The Egyptians tried to enlarge their spiritual vision by magnifying their physical proportions. They were eager to rise above the limitations of their flesh and blood. "They conceived their art," writes Champollion, "like men a hundred feet high."

Art is philosophy translated into color and rhythm and form. Like the Sumerians and the Egyptians, the Babylonians, the Persians and the Hindus tried to resolve the mysterious design of existence into patterns more easy to understand—paintings, statues, temples, vases, jewels, poems, dances, songs. The Hanging Gardens of Babylon—representing "the suspended Garden of Paradise"—terrace upon terrace of artificial groves planted by Nebuchadnezzar upon a series of towers that tapered upward like a modern skyscraper. A gigantic bouquet of living plants, rising up from Babylon as an offering to the gods. The coverlets and the carpets of Persia, resplendent with "the figures of heaven and the colors of the sunset." The dances of India, imitations and adorations of the

movement of the stars. Or the Taj Mahal—"the most beautiful tomb ever built for the most beautiful woman that ever lived"—a poem of marble and jewels and gold, whose reflection dances in an adjoining pool aquiver with the dance of life.

But China was the Oriental country which did most to transform art into a philosophy and philosophy into an art. Marco Polo, who had come from Venice, the most beautiful city in Europe, described the Chinese city of Han-Chow as "the most beautiful city in the world." For here, he said, men had learned the art not only of creating beautiful things but of living a joyous and harmonious life. In China, writes Havelock Ellis, it was the custom for a man to invite his friends to "do me the honor of directing your jeweled feet to my despicable hovel." And the friend replied that it would be a pleasure "for me, a contemptible worm, to crawl into your glorious palace." (The Chinese, it appears, have an excellent sense of humor as well as an exquisite feeling for art; they know how to talk with their honorable tongue in their cheek.)

Early in their historic development, the Chinese became imbued with a mystical sensitivity toward the harmony of existence. Their philosophers had referred to this as *Tao*—the rhythmic dance of the world. We find this "dancing harmony" in much of the Chinese music, painting, poetry, sculpture, architecture, handicrafts, "the life of the theater and the theater of life." They referred to a perfect musical tone as "the picture of the Universe," and to a noble human act as "the picture of music." The imitative pictures of life—the Chinese paintings—were often arranged in groups, like a sequence of Hogarth's, to tell a story or to teach a philosophic truth. The Chinese painted on silk scrolls—not to be displayed on the wall, but to be stored away and taken out occasionally for "reading and study," like a book. "He alone can paint well who thinks well and lives well." Painting was regarded as the spontaneous expression of the great artist's personality. It was said of one of these great painters, Lich-Hi, that he could fill his mouth with colored water and spit it out into a perfect picture. "Every painting," said the artist Wang-Wei, "should be a poem; and every poem, a philosophical tract. For all three alike represent the inner harmony of life."

The greatest of the Chinese painters came to be known as *Tao-tze*, Master of the Secret of Life. When he painted a halo, said his

contemporaries, his hand "seemed to be possessed by the whirlwind." For "his heart was in communion with the heart of truth." So closely was he in touch with nature that he "could paint a hundred miles of landscape from memory." Like a prophet or a sage, "he came we know not whence, and he departed we know not whither." Legend has it that when he was ready to leave this world, he painted a cave, stepped into its mouth and was never seen again.

It was with this sort of reverence, mingled with a joyous spirit of fun, that the Chinese regarded the arts. Especially the art of living. The main objective of art, the main objective of life, was to bring home the fact that God and man and the world are one continuous and harmonious stream. All activity in China was regulated by the spirit of music and ceremony and play. Music, the rhythm of sound; ceremony, the rhythm of conduct; play, the rhythm of the dance. "The way of the earth is the channel by which we apprehend the way of Heaven. And it is the way of grace." To the Chinese philosopher, the Chinese artist, in a small way to the Chinese man in the street, life was presented as an art—"always," as Émile Hovelague observed, "regular and measured, as though to the tune of unheard music." One of the ancient gods, said the Chinese philosophers, sacrificed himself (like Jesus) that his people might be redeemed—not in goodness, but in beauty. The name of this god was Tung. "And Tung, when he saw that the potter's clay came out broken and distorted and dull, threw himself into the fire that his strength and his beauty and his life might be added to the clay. And from that day on, the potter's art has been sublime. For the perfect glaze is the god's blood; the material is the god's flesh; the color, the god's spirit."

And the blood and the flesh of Chinese art represented the soul of philosophy, the spirit of life.

### *Goodness and Beauty—The Greek Philosophers*

The Greek word for the universe was *kosmos*; and the word meant a designed pattern, a work of art, a *creation of beauty*. "And God made the world and saw that it was good because it was beautiful." To the Greeks there was no distinction between ethics and esthetics. *Moral* conduct was *musical* conduct—behavior that sang

in unison with life. Justice was harmony. The artist, like the philosopher and the prophet, was a man inspired to reveal the design of God to the eyes of man.

The Greeks had a word—indeed, more than one word—for the artistic inspiration. The artist was *ecstatic*, carried away from his earthly self; he was *enthusiastic*, possessed by a heavenly power; he was swept along by the *Muses*, the divine dancing spirits of a living world in tune. Every artist was a weaver of measures: the musician, a weaver of measured sounds; the painter, of measured colors; the poet, of measured cadences; the sculptor, of measured symmetry; the philosopher, of measured thought. Every work of art was thus a mirror of the world in miniature. For the world to the Greeks was "a perfect composition of melodious notes."

For a time the sophists tried to ridicule the conception of the artist as a creature inspired by the gods. "Art," said Protagoras, "is merely a skill that can be taught to anyone." And the so-called "god-ridden" artist is nothing more than a clever craftsman who has mastered the tools of his trade. "You can teach a man to be a good poet just as you can teach him to be a good carpenter." There is nothing more mysterious in a well-turned phrase of Homer than in a skilfully constructed leather sole.

"But you are wrong," said Plato. There is all the difference in the world between them. The carpenter is made; the poet is born. He is a creature apart—"a light and winged and holy thing; and there is no invention in him until he is inspired and possessed." For it is "not by skill that the poet sings, but by divine power." The poets, the artists, the makers and the interpreters of beauty, are sent into the world as the "ministers of God." The artist need not be wise so long as he is inspired. Quite often he speaks more profoundly than he is aware. Like a fountain, "he allows to flow out freely whatever comes in"—even though "he may not understand the meaning of what he says."

The artist, then, is a sort of funnel through which the meaning of life is conveyed to the minds of men. Beauty and goodness are not acquired skills but fundamental truths. Or, to be more Platonically exact, a single undivided truth. *Beauty and goodness are one.* The artist is at one with the prophet. He beholds as in a lightning

flash what all of us see dimly through the dark—the “beautiful goodness” of the world.

And, said Plato, a work of art is genuine only then when it enlarges our own vision through the vision of the artist; when it enables us to see goodness in beauty, and beauty in goodness; when it conveys to us something of the “divine joy” that possessed the artist in the enchantment of his revelation.

The purpose of art, therefore, is not only to entertain but to teach. The Greeks aimed at ethical instruction through esthetic recreation. With this point of view even the sophists agreed. “It is our business,” said Protagoras, “to preserve the artistic patterns laid down by our ancestors for our communal life.” Every child, said Plato, should be taught the way to goodness through the understanding of beauty. “Then will our youth dwell in a land of health, amid fair sights and sounds, and receive the good in everything; and beauty, the outpouring of the artist’s vision, shall flow into the eye and ear . . . and draw the soul from earliest years into sympathy with the pattern of reason.” The unity of existence—the harmony of life.

But people do not pursue art merely as a means to education. They go to the museum or the theater, and they buy beautiful clothes or build beautiful homes, because they want to be entertained. And, said Plato, they are right. The first objective of the artist is to give pleasure. Does this mean, however, that the artist must submit to the taste of the uneducated masses? Must he bow to the “evil of teatrocracy—the clappings and the hissings” of the “unmusical multitude” in the gallery? Not at all. The excellence of a work of art, it is true, “should be measured by (the yardstick of) pleasure.” But the pleasure “must not be that of the rabble; the most beautiful art is that which delights the best educated—those who are ripe for the highest enjoyment of life.”

And the pleasure produced by beauty must in turn conduce to justice. “What will it profit a man if under the excitement of poetry he neglects his fellow men?” Art and happiness and justice, beauty and duty, morality and music—all these are the closely interwoven strands in the rhythmic pattern of life.

And so the ultimate purpose of art is to attune the listening soul

of man to the singing soul of the world. And every branch of art is but a different approach to the selfsame end. Whatever the art, whatever the place, whatever the time, "beauty and goodness are measure and symmetry and song."

### *Beauty and the Dance*

The origin of the dance is in the pulsation of life. It is *coextensive with* life, with the very existence of the universe. The constellations dance, at regular intervals, over their orbits in the sky. The waves dance, in measured rhythm, against the shore. The smile dances over the infant's face. The heart dances in the presence of happy news. The philosopher's thought dances to the beat of cosmic time. And the savage dances out of the sheer exuberance of being alive.

The purpose of the dance, like the purpose of many of the other manifestations of beauty, is two-fold. It serves as an erotic impulse to the transmission of life, and as a mystical identification with the rhythmic current of existence.

The erotic aspect of the dance has been recognized from early antiquity. "Dancing," said the Greek writer, Lucian, "is as old as love." It is the preliminary to love not only among humans but even among birds and insects—such, for example, as the ostrich and the pheasant, the butterfly and the moth. Generally it is the male that dances to arouse the female. And the climax of the dance, if acceptable, leads to the copulation of the lovers.

The dance as an initiation to love has remained a universal custom to this day. In a number of savage tribes the same word means *to dance* and *to beget*. And in some of our so-called "civilized" tribes, the Puritans are still afraid of the "dissolute movements that are meant to arouse the cupidity of the flesh."

Yet the erotic form of the dance—"the promise of grace to the strength of the race"—is more than a mere instinct for cupidity. It is an expression of beauty under the light of love. In the eyes of his beloved, the clumsiest dancer becomes a glorious Apollo—a god worthy of transmitting his divinity through the channel of their mutual desire.

For the dance, even in its erotic phase, and however awkward in its motion, is a "reverential thing"—an effort of man to align him-



self, as a creator, on the side of the angels. The universal urge to dance—the impulse to create, even though it remains but an impulse—makes potential artists of us all. Despite its degradation in the public stews, dancing has in it something of the nature of a sacrament. For, in its final analysis, it is not only a creative impulse but a religious experience. It is a comprehensive expression of life. This is especially true of dancing among the savages. When a member of the Bantu tribe met a member of another tribe, wrote Livingstone, he didn't ask him, "What do you do for a living?" He merely asked, "What do you dance?" For the savage's dance represented his tribe, his occupation, his custom, his purpose, his faith. To gain the good will of the gods, he did not pray to them; he danced to them. "The gods dance, and the stars dance, and we too must dance or the gods will be angry with us."

Dancing is a social art. It means not only the harmonization of the different parts of the body, but the correlation of several separate bodies into an organic unit of beautiful motion. It is the symbolic union, as even the savages felt, "of man with man, of all men with the world."

The dance was regarded as a "sacred drama, an activity in imitation of the activity of Heaven," not only among the primitive savages, but among the Greek worshipers of Bacchus, the Hindu devotees of Siva, the Hebrew guardians of the Sacred Ark, the Christian Brotherhood of the early Church. Some of the Eskimo tribes, it is reported, used to set aside four days out of seven for holidays—"days for dancing and conversation with the gods." And in the churches of Paris and Limoges and Roussillon the priests used to dance at the Eastertide services up to comparatively recent times. In the orthodox Jewish communities the rabbis and the congregation even today dance together "in the presence of the Lord" on the annual completion of the reading of the Torah.

All these dances are *group* dances, and they symbolize the weaving of the many into the one. The continual interfusion of the dancing group from pattern to pattern is but a momentary reflection of the eternal interfusion of the waters of the earth and the constellations in the sky. "The more they change, the more they remain as one." The art of dancing is an embracement of the human with the divine. The professional dancers of India—the

"sacred *Devadasis*"—are expected to yield to the embraces of any man who will pay the price. Yet they are symbolically married to the gods, and their dances are meant to represent the movements and the thoughts of their celestial mates.

"And the Lord beheld the sunlight dancing upon the sea, and He smiled and said, 'The world is good.'" For the entire world, it has been observed, is "a kind of dance."

### *Beauty in Music*

The rhythm of music originated in the rhythm of the dance. The Greeks said that Orpheus, the mythical inventor of music and of poetry, was especially interested in "the dancing of the clouds and the rivers and the trees." The entire history of music, from the measured chant of savages at work to the symphonies of Beethoven and Brahms, is a story of dancing notes arranged into a symmetrical unit. "A good education," said Plato, "consists in knowing how to dance and to sing." For these are the socializing factors in life—the elements that harmonize people into a "rhythmic coöperation."

But what is music? "If you would know what it is," writes Professor Louis W. Flaccus, "ask the musician and you will be disappointed." Various definitions have been given for it—"music is fluid architecture, just as architecture is frozen music"—"it is the language of the emotions"—"a succession of tones so modulated as to please the ear"—"a combination of simultaneous tones in harmony"—"a taste for melody"—"the science of the arrangement of sound"—but none of these definitions is satisfactory. For they do not go to the heart of the subject. Perhaps it is impossible to define music because it is impossible to analyze emotion—the human emotion for concerted living. To revert once more to Plato, the fountain-head of almost all modern wisdom, "it is the function of the musician to sing, of the poet to make verse, and of the flower to grow"—without any conscious reasoning as to the ultimate explanation of the urge. Shall we not be content with some such—admittedly imperfect—definition of music as the following? Music, to the composer and the listener alike, is the arrested echo of the continual heartbeat of the world. It is, to use Dr. Isaac Goldberg's happy expression, a "tonal mirror" of the universe. In any great musical

composition, as Milton observed, "more is meant than meets the ear."

The art of music, then, like the other arts, is a partial interpretation of the totality of existence. A song, a sonata, a symphony, a concerto, an opera—all these musical structures are organic units of proportions and correlations, bits of cosmic sound apprehended and interlaced into mosaics of beauty. The beauty of music is the tonal reminder of the beauty of the world.

The beauty of regularity—of the measured respiration that governs the current of life. And the beauty of compatibility—of the unifying principle that integrates the multiple chords of existence into a symphonic whole.

### *Beauty in Painting*

The painter sees the world with a philosophic eye, just as the composer hears it with a philosophic ear. He sees the landscape, the individual, the group, not as a disconnected jumble of irrelevant materials, but as an organized unit of masses and colors and lines suffused with a definite personality and spirit. The true painter depicts not only the *body* but the *soul* of the world. He reproduces the outer light that delineates the objects of nature, and the inner light that reveals them. And in this revelation he glimpses the image of a patterned universe.

Like the composer, therefore, the painter is concerned with the relationship of things. He finds order in confusion, structure in deformity, and a rhythmic regularity in the turmoil of the storm. He "squeezes out color like drops of gold, and color like drops of wine"—and peoples "the mad sad world of man with creatures and things divine."

For it is the purpose of the painter to show the divine element in human life. He is not content with the mere *imitation* of nature; he tries to *interpret* nature by *re-creating* it. By throwing upon it the light of his superior vision, so that we too, like himself, can see a living design where our untrained and unaided vision would have seen nothing but a designless and lifeless heap. The great painter has the ability to stand away from the rest of us—to stand away, so to speak, even from himself. In his creative ecstasy, he not only *sees*

the world from a new angle and under a new light; he is able to *show* it as he sees it. He is, in the truest sense of the term, a decorator of our piecemeal understanding of existence. For the word *decorator* means *a man who fits separate pieces together into a single design*. The painter, like the musician, is inspired with the revelation of the singleness of life.

As an illustration of this point, take Rembrandt's famous painting of the *Cloth Merchants of Amsterdam*. Five manufacturers and their servant—ordinary people with ordinary thoughts, peccadillos, ambitions to get ahead, desires to outwit one another, inconsequential little worries about unimportant little things—several isolated humans drifting down the current of mutual boredom to their several graves. Yet see what Rembrandt does with them as he looks upon them under the light of his inspired vision. An organized unit of pulsating life. In the painting we can see only six people; but we can tell from their faces that there are others in the room—connecting links in the continuous chain of humanity that reaches around the world. And now glance at these merchants a little more closely. They are evidently discussing a matter of common interest. The central figure is presiding at the table, with the book of accounts open before him. He is trying to explain something to one of the company in the hall (but not in the picture). All the other faces are turned in the direction of the invisible troublemaker. Some of the faces look serious, others amused, still others scornful, as if they are impatient at the unnecessary interruption.

Yet in the entire composition of the picture there is a united serenity that transcends the confusions and the misunderstandings of the moment. "Patience, my little fellows! Sooner or later you will learn that all of you are members of a single friendly family." Observe the eyes that look out from under the black steeple hats. Eyes full of an understanding humor, of mutual trust, of an ultimate, all-forgiving affection between man and man. Notice the glow of health, spiritual as well as physical, that shines upon all the faces—especially upon the face of that elderly gentleman with the grayish hair whose hand rests firmly upon the knob of his armchair. In the revealing vision of the artist there is no old age, no sickness, no decay, no despondency, no death.

And note, finally, the harmony of color with the harmony of life.

The deep mahogany of the furniture as well as of the paneled wooden background; the brightness of the tablecloth in the foreground—the richest of imaginable reds which kindle into scarlet on the left, at the spot where the light falls directly upon it. A perfect pattern of beauty and luster and life. A miniature portrait of the world.

### *Beauty in Literature*

Beauty, as manifested in any of the arts—dancing, music, painting, pottery, sculpture, architecture—serves either as an invitation to the enjoyment of life or as a revelation of its meaning. We shall find these two aspects of beauty functioning in literature as in the other arts.

The writer is an artist in words; just as the musician is an artist in tones; and the painter, in colors and lines. Words, however, are more difficult to use than tones and colors; for the same word may have different meanings for different people. Yet, in spite of this drawback, the artist in words has an advantage over his fellow artists in other fields. For a word produces not only a sound, but an image and a thought. The skilful artist in words can thus be a musician and a painter and a writer in one. A good poem sings and paints and philosophizes. The same, in a more limited way, is true of a good piece of prose.

The writer, then, is perhaps the most universal of artists. For he can approach the meaning of the universe through the greatest number of channels. Sometimes the mere cadence of a word or a phrase, aside from the context in which it appears, may electrify the reader with a flash of cosmic beauty. Sometimes an isolated figure of speech may reveal a hidden relationship between the reader and the world. But when we come upon a passage in which the sound and the color and the thought are woven into a perfect design, as in Shakespeare, in Homer, in Shelley or in Keats, we catch a reflection of the order that regulates the motions of the heavens and the motives of men. Such revelations make us indeed "rich in the simple worship of a day."

For the poet is heaven's ambassador on earth. He sees and he sings and he paints the soul of beauty that vitalizes the body of everyday existence. In one of the most understanding of modern

poems, *May Jones Takes the Air*, Roy Helton describes a street walker out for a stroll. An insignificant incident, on a commonplace day, dealing with the lowest of human rubbish. Yet there is something divine in this creature, this occasion, this day. Listen to the poet:

The night is nailed aloft with gold—the wind is on her hair,  
And love is searching through her eyes; if time has love to spare . . .

Nations are marching. Cities yet unseen  
Roar on the pavements where her feet have been:  
New worlds! Wise worlds! Worlds all gold and green!  
This is your birth night. Rain your splendors down!  
May Jones of Filbert Street is walking into town.

The writer—the poet, the dramatist, the historian, the novelist, the reporter of news—is a reporter of life. He is the interpreter of the vitality that exists and persists and passionately seeks for self-expression and for self-perpetuation. The great writer writes of himself; and in so doing, he writes of the world. He may not even be aware of the fact that he is “spinning a thread of beauty around the world.” Just as unaware as the skylark when he spins his thread of song. He merely reproduces the joyousness of life in the joyous outpouring of his heart. Nietzsche beautifully describes, in so far as language is able to describe, the creative process in the poet’s mind: “A thought suddenly flashes up like lightning; it comes of necessity, unhesitatingly—I have never had any choice in the matter . . . There is the feeling that one is completely out of hand . . . a depth of happiness . . . in such an overflow of light . . . Everything happens quite involuntarily, as if in a tempestuous outburst of freedom, of absoluteness, of power and divinity . . . This is my experience of inspiration.”

*Inspiration*—an intaking of the living breath of the world to be translated into living images and thoughts. “The cadences of the artist’s speech,” writes Havelock Ellis, “are the cadences of his heart, and the footfalls of his rhythm the footfalls of his spirit, in a great adventure across the universe.” The greatest genius among writers is he whose language most closely approaches the dancing harmony of life.

For perfect language means perfect music, perfect imagery, perfect ideas. The great style mirrors not only the soul of the stylist, but the spirit that animates the world. "Be thou me, impetuous one!" sings Shelley to the West Wind—

Make me thy lyre even as the forest is:

. . . . .

Be through my lips to unawaken'd earth  
The trumpet of a prophecy!

The poet, like the musician and the painter, is a man enraptured—seized and swept along over heaven and earth so that he may come back with the latest tidings of God. Every great new poet brings us a great new vision of the world. Most of us, since our own senses are blurred, must see the world through the artist's eyes. Thank Heaven for our artists. Were it not for the magic of their superior sight, how drab our world would appear! Unlike the botanist, the artist may not be able to tell one tree from another; and unlike the ornithologist, he may confuse—even as Goethe confused—the gold finch with the lark. But the artist alone can tell what it is that gives a soul of beauty to the lark and the finch, and the fir and the cedar and the spruce, and the mountains and the oceans and the rivers and the stars. The poet is not merely a scientific observer; he is a prophetic seer. He is a man who beholds a rhythmic vision and who mirrors it in a metrical form. He has something pleasant to say and a pleasant voice to say it in. He is the Pied Piper, and we are the children who follow his tune into the Enchanted Forest. "Philosophy," said Socrates—and by "philosophy" he meant all serious writing—"is simply music." And all music is a dance. The dance of notes, of pigments, of words, of ideas, of associations, of hopes—all these are the temporary echoes of the eternal dance of life. The great style moves us, writes Havelock Ellis, "because it is itself moved by pulses which in varying measure we also have inherited, and because its primary source is in the heart of a cosmos from which we ourselves spring."

*Beauty in Everyday Life*

There is no life so barren and no character so base as to be utterly devoid of an aspiration to beauty. Even the heart of a Caliban, the grossest of imaginable creatures, is attuned to the pulsating heart of the universe. The island of Caliban's plotting and slaving and swilling is full of noises, he tells Stephano—

Sounds and sweet airs, that give delight, and hurt not.  
Sometimes a thousand twanging instruments  
Will hum about mine ears; and sometimes voices,  
That, if I then had waked after long sleep,  
Will make me sleep again: and then, in dreaming,  
The clouds methought would open, and show riches  
Ready to drop upon me; that, when I waked,  
I cried to dream again . . .

All of us have our dreams, our visions of the world as it really is—ecstatic moments of "sounds and sweet airs," of "twanging instruments" and of cloudbanks laden with riches and beauty. And in our waking moments, we long to "dream again," and we surround ourselves with the remembered fragments of our dreams.

And thus we try to embellish our lives with an individual and a social sense of beauty.

1. Our individual sense of beauty. Every one of us aspires to worship beauty in his personal life—the artist in his poem, his painting, his weaving, his sculpture and his song, and you and I in our home, our garden, our furniture, our dancing and our dress.

Our individual instinct for art is both biological and psychological; it stimulates the fertility of the body, and it satisfies the hunger of the soul. The bird that decorates its nest, the savage male who paints his face and the civilized female who paints hers, the dancer whose rhythm suggests copulation (a gesture which in itself is neither moral nor immoral, but merely artistic), the gardener who creates a flowerbed of fragrance and beauty, the dressmaker and the cobbler and the bootblack, the nylon manufacturer and the milliner and the hairdresser and the carver of precious stones—all these may be roughly grouped under the name of "biological artists." For



their purpose, whether conscious or subconscious, is to help the propagation of the species through the attraction of the individual. Even the writer of the so-called "suggestive" book has his biological if not his moral justification in this life-teeming and life-reproducing world of ours. Nature provides the stimulus as well as the means, whatever the censors may think of it.

Every one of us becomes an artist through his biological urge. We try to acquire a graceful carriage of the body, gracious manners at the table, an agreeable voice in conversation, a well-rounded—that is, an artistically balanced—personality, all this because nature is prompting each half of the world to attract the other half in order to keep the entire world intact and alive.

2. And this brings us to the second embellishment of our lives—our social as allied to our individual instinct for beauty. Indeed, it is sometimes difficult to distinguish the individual from the social aspects of art. If I love an antique piece of furniture, for example, it is—at least partially—because I am drawn as by invisible threads to a union *with*, through a sympathy *for*, the life of my ancestors. The combination of the individual and the social elements in our instinct for beauty is even more obvious in our almost universal love for dancing. When two people dance, they are united not only by an individual urge to attract or to be attracted, but by a social spirit for interlacing harmonies into patterns. Watch a crowd at a dance hall. Note how everybody is intent exclusively upon his own little gyrations. But suddenly the floor is animated with the grace of a couple who really *know* how to dance. Everybody stops to look on. The collective passion for beauty has melted individual desires into an ardor for contemplating the reproduction of the rhythmic pulse of the universe. Even the solo dancer—from the child who skips to the tune of the hurdy-gurdy to the ballerina who weaves an accompaniment to a Stravinsky suite—is a social artist, an interpreter of the universal and symmetrical pattern of life.

Our social sense of beauty pervades almost our entire life. It finds expression in our aggregate propensity for building churches and for uniting within them our adorations and our prayers and our hearts. It emerges in our impulse to adorn our cities with museums and monuments and libraries and parks. It comes to a soul in our effort to improve the physical and the moral and the spiritual har-

monies of our group, our community, our state. And it takes on a religious character—"every great artist," said Rodin, "has a religious mind"—in our hunger for a forgiving thought, a charitable act, a conciliatory smile and a friendly embrace. The divinest art of them all is the simple human art of getting along.

Beauty, then, is not—as Emerson observed—"its own excuse for being." It is not a thing apart, an isolated abstraction removed from the general scheme of things. It is woven into the very texture of our everyday life. It is that "sense sublime" whose dwelling, as Wordsworth reminds us,

is the light of setting suns,  
And the round ocean and the living air,  
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man.

To recognize this, to live understandingly in the presence of beauty, is to remain eternally young. For art is all recreation, all *creation*—the daily reawakening of a world that is forever alive, forever vibrant, forever new.

## VI

# The Assessment of Human Conduct — Ethics

### *The Meaning of Morality*

**E**THICS is the science of human duty. It defines the moral relationship between man and man.

The word *moral* needs to be properly understood. Derived from the Latin word *mores*, which means *customs*, it originally referred to those manners or modes of conduct which were socially regarded as correct. When society incorporated its customs into laws, a moral injunction became a legal command. The Ten Commandments of the Old Testament represent this transitional stage from the moral to the legal. Later on, when legality became petrified into formality, the meaning of the word *moral* underwent a new change. It took on a religious connotation. A *moral* action was now regarded as a *righteous* action—an action which brought you into the right relationship not only toward your fellow men but also and especially toward God.

The distinction between what is legally permissible and what is morally right is well illustrated in a little story told by Professor Munro. One day a Harvard teacher of law explained to his students a decision handed down by the Supreme Court of Massachusetts. "This decision, sir," observed one of his students, "seems legal all right. But is it just?"

"Young man," said the professor, "this is the Law School. If you want justice, go across the street to the Divinity School."

Of late, however, there has been an attempt "to bring justice back

into the law schools"—to merge the moral once more with the legal, to widen the field of ethics from theology to jurisprudence. Men like Cardozo and Oliver Wendell Holmes have done their best to interpret the law in accordance with the ethical standards of the most progressive minds.

Not only the law but every phase of human activity is now being measured by the rules of morality. But these rules are not fixed. Like all the rest of the world, they are in a state of continual flux. Established customs, to quote Professor Dewey, "lose their quasi-sacredness and are the objects of moral questionings." We are beginning to re-examine the old questions and, wherever necessary, to revise or to replace the old answers. What is good? What is evil? What is right? What is wrong? Does might make right? Is it right to look out for the interests of the other fellow? To what extent? To the extent of hurting your own interests, of "falling"—as Dr. Richard C. Cabot puts it—"over your own feet?" What is the relationship between your rights and your duties? Between you and your country? Between your country and the rest of the world? Is it right for you and your country to be independent or interdependent, isolationist or internationalist? To put it on a more selfish basis, which of these two policies is the more advantageous for you and your country? Is selfishness always wrong? What *is* selfishness? What is altruism? What is the moral distinction between the two? What is the moral distinction between indifference and devotion, meanness and magnanimity, shrewdness and wisdom, avarice and charity, competition and coöperation, cruelty and mercy, hatred and love?

To these questions it would seem, at first blush, that even a child could supply the answers. Yet the task is not so easy. For the proper answers would necessitate a careful diagnosis of the human soul. It takes a good deal of training to understand the rules of our *physical* health. Yet every untrained person pretends to understand the rules of our *spiritual* health. "Is there anything you know or care for?" asks Undershaft of Stephen in Bernard Shaw's *Major Barbara*.

"Yes," replies Stephen. "I know the difference between right and wrong."

*Undershaft*: "You don't say so! What, no capacity for business, no knowledge of law, no sympathy with art, no pretension to phi-

losophy; only a simple knowledge of the secret that has puzzled all the philosophers, baffled all the lawyers, muddled all the men of business, and ruined most of the artists: the secret of right and wrong. Why, man, you're a genius, a master of masters, a god!"

Our human inability to find a definite answer to our ethical questions has compelled us to flounder between the doctrine of Machiavelli, who regarded all the Christian vices as virtues, and the teaching of Jesus, who would have denounced all the Machiavellian virtues as sins. What seems right to one man may seem wrong to another. What appears good in one age or locality may appear bad in another locality or age. In the primitive world of Abraham, polygamy was considered a virtue, for the land was plentiful and the population scarce. In the civilized world of today, it is condemned as a vice, for the population is plentiful and the land scarce. In the Orient it is a mark of respect to *cover* the head; in the Occident, to *uncover* it. In Melanesia it was ethical to kill the sick and the old in order to relieve the burden of the healthy and the young. In China it was a dutiful act to present an ailing relative with a coffin. In the Solomon Islands it was no sin to fatten young women, like young turkeys, for the slaughter. Even in Europe and in America the vices of peace have often become the virtues of war. Morality, with its constantly shifting values, is largely a matter of time and place and circumstance and individual point of view.

Largely, but not wholly. For in all the changing scenery of our moral concepts there are certain fixed principles—signposts that point the way out of the jungle toward the light. In our survey of the ethical groping of the human mind, we shall try to explain these fixed principles that are always tending to guide us rightward and upward.

### *Social Behavior in Early History*

The beginning of religion was man's fear of the Lord. The beginning of ethics was man's fear of his fellow men. In the early stages of history, when individuals became organized into societies, they acquired the rudiments of teamplay for the serious game of life. Their rules were simple, stable and severe. Whoever violated these rules was immediately driven off the team—that is, he was promptly put to death. Primitive morality, therefore, meant the

compulsory obedience of the individual toward the mass. The individual had a maximum of duties and a minimum of rights.

First among his duties was a strict adherence to the code in the matter of sex. For the relations of the sexes lay at the basis of all life and of nearly all jealousy and turmoil. The first considerable war of which we have any record—the expedition against Troy—was the result of one man's seduction of another man's wife. Society had advanced from casual promiscuity to conjugal fidelity. A new sense of obligation had arisen among men. The *ethical* code had become synonymous with the *sexual* code. A man of good morals was a man who adhered to the established sex customs of his tribe. This was even more true of a *woman* of good morals. For the women were the men's slaves—their beasts of burden. "They are doomed by nature," said an Australian native, "to carry not only our belongings on their backs, but our children in their bellies." Chastity had become the chief criterion for sanctity; virginity, for virtue. Among the primitive tribes of Asia, an unmarried woman found cohabiting with a man was burned at the stake. In Borneo, the unmarried girls were put into solitary confinement—to keep them out of temptation. In parts of Africa, strangely enough, the women were forbidden to cover their bodies, since "clothing excites the passions of men."

This ancient insistence upon chastity as the basis of morality served its purpose. For it tended to keep the individual—especially during the adolescent period—physically and mentally strong. The sexual strength of the individual is a pretty good insurance for the ethical advancement of the race. It takes a strong body to nourish a saintly mind.

As civilization advanced and the race became stronger and more secure, the concepts of morality grew beyond the limits of sexuality. The ethical code kept expanding and changing with the changing needs of society. At first it was everybody for himself, and the devil take the hindmost. But little by little the dawn of reciprocity began to replace the darkness of belligerency. Within limited groups, mankind awoke to a fellowship of mutual interests. "In the desperate struggle for life," the early moralists discovered, "it is wise for us to help one another." Pettiness began to soften into pity, and cruelty into kindness. In some tribes this rising spirit of kindness, of generosity toward your kind, took—like all new ideas—an exag-

gerated turn. Men insisted on sharing not only their victuals but their wives with their guests. The sense of individual importance gave way to a feeling of tribal superiority. Many an ancient, like many a modern, group of savages regarded themselves as the chosen race. The American Indians declared that they were "The Only Men" of pure blood. A South Sea islander, when he first beheld that "strange animal"—a white man—laughed in derision. "We alone," he said, "are people." The Eskimos believed that God had sent the white people to them to learn manners. Hence it followed that a man must behave with decency toward his own group but with severity toward all the rest of the world.

Later on, as tribes developed into states, the concepts of morality widened into a more extended spirit of neighborliness. And always there were individuals who saw beyond the horizon of their habitation and their tribe. These individuals—teachers, prophets, philosophers, saints—kept on critically examining the old and hopefully projecting the new. With the bulk of humanity, time marches on. But the leaders of humanity are always a jump ahead of their time.

### *The Ethics of the Oriental Philosophers*

The first ethical teacher of whom we have any historical knowledge was the Sumerian king, Urukagina—a man as ancient to King David as King David is to us. Urukagina was the Martin Luther of the world's First Reformation. He inveighed against the injustices of the rich and the corruptions of the priests. The High Priest, he declared, must no longer "come into the garden of a poor widow and take away her vegetables or her fruits." He put a ceiling price upon the funerals of his subjects, reducing the former exorbitant rates by eighty per cent. And he put an end to the black market in the traffic of cattle sold for sacrificial purposes. The duty of the people, he said, was to render allegiance to their king; but the duty of the king was to give liberty to his subjects.

And thus we find, in the earliest and briefest of ethical codes, a universal principle that lies at the foundation of all the shifting manners and morals of the passing generations. It is the *duty* of the strong to *protect* the weak rather than the *privilege* of the strong to *exploit* the weak.

As we pass on from Sumeria to Egypt, we find at first that there has been a recession in the moral standards of man. "If thou wouldst rule the earth," wrote one of the early Pharaohs to his son, "harden thyself against all thy subjects. The people give heed to him who terrorizes them. Fill not thy heart with a brother. Be a friend to none, a master to all."

The heart of man is an endless battlefield between the ambition to rule and the inspiration to serve. It is the fight between the individual and the universal within us all. And it is the business of ethics to point the *way out* of this fight, to bring the individual into harmony with the universal, and to demonstrate that he who tyrannizes over others merely succeeds in tyrannizing over himself. The Egyptian kings who hoped to thrive on violence were overthrown in violent wars—how reluctant the dictatorial mind is to learn this repetitious lesson of history!—but the Egyptian philosophers added another chapter to the epic of human fellowship.

One of the early Egyptian philosophers was also a Pharaoh; but he was quite different from the king who had advised his son to oppress his subjects. In the course of his instructions to his vizier, he said:

"Look to your duties; be watchful over all that you do . . . Your office is not sweet; it is bitter . . . Behold, it is not for you to favor the princes; it is for you to serve the people . . . See to it that every man, from every part of our land, may have his rights . . . It is an abomination of the gods to show partiality . . . Behold, the wisdom of a prince is to do justice."

The philosophy of Egypt was alive with this sense of obligation toward the unfortunate "stepchildren of God." Power was a trust; and private wealth, an instrument for public welfare. "Give bread to him who has no field," wrote an Egyptian philosophic poet, "and create for thyself a good name forevermore." And one of the Wise Men of Rameses gave this instruction to his students for public office:

"Be not greedy for a cubit of land, and do not encroach upon the boundary of the widow. Receive your bread from your own threshing floor. For better is a bushel gained by your honest labor than ten thousand acquired by transgression or deceit."

And then the writer, with an insight worthy of a modern psy-



chologist, gives his students a practical reason for his theoretical philosophy. It pays to be generous! There is but a single currency for the purchase of happiness. Good will. *God's* will. "More precious than riches in the storehouse is the sympathy of man and the smile of God."

Good conduct, said the Egyptian philosophers, is a spiritual asset even when it is a material liability. "Live in the house of kindness," wrote Ptah-hotep, the Governor of Memphis, "and men shall come and offer thee gifts of themselves."

Kindliness was the perennial dream of the Egyptian thinkers. They looked ever forward to the coming of the Great Kind Redeemer. "He shall bring cooling to the flame of human hatred. For he is the shepherd of all men, and there is no evil in his heart."

This Messianic note stirred all the ancient generations to a hunger for progress. The Messiah, the Gentle Man Supreme, was the ideal after whom all thoughtful persons tried to model themselves. This ideal was incorporated in the so-called *Confession of the Dead*—a noble summary of the Egyptian adventure in moral thought:

"Hail to Thee, Great God, Lord of Justice! . . . I have been brought before Thee to behold Thy beauty and truth . . . I have not committed iniquity against my fellow men . . . I have not oppressed the poor . . . I have not overburdened the slaves . . . I have neither cheated nor deceived nor robbed my neighbors . . . I have not brought tears to any man, I have not murdered any man . . . I have sworn no false oaths before man or God . . . I have given no short weights . . . I have not snatched away the milk from the mouths of the sucklings . . . I am pure."

The dominant thought here, as in the ethics of the Sumerians, is man's dawning recognition of human dignity, and his rising sympathy toward human need.

But this sympathetic understanding of human value and human want was still tribal. All Egyptians were brothers; all other people were barbarians. In war, and to a great extent even in peace, there was no such thing as intertribal law. A foreigner was an enemy; and to mutilate an enemy or even to kill him was no crime. Just as the Indian took pride in his collection of scalps, just so the Egyptian found pleasure in his collection of severed hands and noses and

ears. Ethically the Egyptians had reached a stage of what may be called *intramural morality*.

The ethical status of the Egyptians was not only tribal, but its nobler implications were limited to only a few people *within* the tribe. As morality advances, it spreads not only upward, but outward and inward. The union of more and more nations into a single fellowship is brought about through the communion of more and more individuals into a single brotherhood. Good will toward men of *all* nations increases with the increasing number of men of good will in *each* nation.

In ancient society, however, there were but a handful of scattered individuals who possessed the inner light.

One of the most enlightened of these individuals was the Babylonian king, Hammurabi. "The Lord of Heaven and Earth," he wrote, "has called upon me . . . to cause justice to prevail in the land, to destroy the wicked and the cruel, to prevent the strong from oppressing the weak, to proclaim the law and to further the welfare of the people . . . Hammurabi, the king of Babylon, am I, who helped his people in time of need, who established them in security—the ruler of his people, and their servant."

The service to which Hammurabi refers is the establishment of a set of laws "received"—like the laws of Moses—"directly from Heaven." This Code of Hammurabi, the first legal system based upon the principles of ethics, was intended not only to "give justice to the orphan and the widow," but to "set at ease the heart" of "any oppressed man who has a just cause." The Code included almost three hundred statutes dealing with a variety of subjects such as *Business, Real Estate, Personal Property, Family Life, Accidental and Deliberate Injuries*, and the *Rights of Labor*. The laws were simple and—for the most part—sensible, and they went straight to the point. For example: "If a man accuses another man of a capital crime, but cannot prove it, the accuser shall be put to death." Or consider the following: "If a man robs another man and is captured, he shall be put to death. But if the robber is not captured, the man who has been robbed shall, in the presence of (the image of) God, make an itemized statement of his loss, and the city within whose province the robbery was committed shall compensate him for whatever was lost."

This speaks well for the honesty of the government and for the integrity of the citizens. What *city* today would dare to enact such a law? And what *individual* today would resist the temptation to enrich himself under such a law?

Yet the Code of Hammurabi was a mixture of enlightened justice and primitive cruelty. Like the law of Moses, it exacted an eye for an eye. "If a house collapses and kills the purchaser, the builder of the house must die. If the accident kills the purchaser's son, the builder's son must die." Hammurabi's laws were especially hard on physicians. "If a patient dies as the result of an operation, the doctor shall be put to death." And on housewives. "If a woman is proved to have been wasteful in the management of her household, she shall be put to death."

And, like the other ethical codes of antiquity, the laws of Hammurabi in their more enlightened aspect applied only to Babylonians. Every stranger was an outlaw. Hammurabi himself wanted above all to be remembered for two of his accomplishments—the dispensation of his justice among the Babylonians, and the savagery of his fighting against his foes. "A whirlwind in battle, I have cut my enemies into pieces and never lost a fight."

This, then, was the semi-barbarous and semi-civilized nature of social ethics in ancient Babylon. As for its sexual ethics, Babylon was stigmatized as a "cesspool of iniquity" and an "abomination of licentiousness." Every Babylonian woman, writes Herodotus, the Father of History, "is obliged once in her life to sit in the temple of Venus and to have intercourse with some stranger. Many of these women, proud of their wealth, come in covered carriages, and take up their station at the temple with a numerous train of servants . . . Some are continually coming in, and others are going out . . . When a woman has once seated herself in the temple, she must not return home till some stranger has thrown a piece of silver into her lap, and lain with her outside the temple . . . The woman follows the first man that throws the silver, and refuses no one. But when she has had intercourse and has absolved herself from her obligation to the goddess, she returns home . . . Those that are endowed with beauty and symmetry of shape are soon set free. But the deformed are detained a long time; some of them are obliged to wait in the temple for a space of three or four years."

The origin of this strange custom is not known. Most likely it was an effort to propitiate the Goddess of Fertility by offering in her honor the first fruits of love.

In addition to the sacrifice of their women's virginity, the Babylonians indulged in the practice of trial marriage. "It is not good," they said, "to buy the fruit before you have tasted it." And, Herodotus tells us, marriage actually was a business transaction. "Those who had marriageable daughters used to bring them once a year to a place where a great number of men gathered round them. A public crier made them stand up and sold them all, one after another. He began with the most beautiful; and having got a large sum for her, he then put up the second fairest—and so on."

The woman, having been tried and approved and purchased by her man, remained his slave for life. Marital infidelity on the part of the husband was permissible; on the part of the wife, however, it was tabu. When a man caught his wife in adultery, he had his choice of two punishments. He could either drown her, or turn her naked into the streets. Not only the *act* but the *intention* or even the *rumor* of adultery was punishable by death. "If the finger has been pointed at the wife of a man because of another man, even though she has not been taken in bed with another man, for her husband's sake she shall throw herself into the river."

On the other hand—such was the practical logic of the Babylonians—a woman was given certain privileges in return for her drastic duties. "If a man is kept from his wife, either through business or through war, for too long a period, the wife shall be allowed to cohabit with another man until her husband's return." This, in all probability, was not a concession to woman's rights but a measure to increase the population. Babylon needed a continual succession of soldiers for her multitudinous wars.

But if the women were servants to their cradles, the men were slaves to their lust. As Babylon grew bloated with victory, the young men dyed their hair, perfumed their bodies, rouged their cheeks, and decorated themselves with ear-rings, nose-bands, bracelets, necklaces and anklets of silver and gold. Their luxury and their laxity became a byword in ancient literature. "The beauty of Babylon," wrote a Hebrew poet, "is like a golden jewel on the snout of a pig."

And thus in ancient Babylon—how modern it all sounds!—the many were wallowing in the mud while the few were aspiring toward the stars. Another slow yet forward step in man's eternal adventure toward the moral sense.

In Persia we see still another groping step in the same direction. "The face of divinity," said an Oriental poet, "may be seen under many a mask; and the voice of divinity may be heard from many a mouth." In Egypt it was Ptah-hotep who tried to formulate the alphabet of ethical wisdom. In Babylonia it was Hammurabi. And now in Persia it was Cyrus who attempted to advance a little further along the road from the human to the humane.

Cyrus was one of the first military conquerors whose natural kindness brought him the respect of his enemies. He saw beyond the horizon of his own tribal interests. Though his method was military, the purpose that lay behind it was the unification of the world. "He built an empire," said Herodotus, "founded upon generosity." He believed in the ethical principle that the best way to deal with an enemy is to turn him into a friend. "There is no incentive in fighting against Cyrus," said a Babylonian soldier, "because he treats us so well when we are defeated." When Croesus, the king of Lydia, lost his war against Cyrus, he was about to destroy himself on a funeral pyre. But Cyrus ordered the flames to be extinguished and made him one of his trusted advisers. "A living friend," he said, "is better than a dead foe."

His magnanimity extended to the rank and file of the nations that he had conquered. He tolerated their customs, respected their religions, and honored their gods. He treated his victims with justice; but he insisted that they treat *their* victims with an equal justice. When, after a long and bitter fight he defeated the Babylonians, he did not take them captive, as was customary at the time. Instead, he demanded that the Babylonians release the Jews from their captivity and restore them to Palestine. To be sure, this equitable policy indicated a long head as well as a capacious heart. But morality is the right conduct of the heart inspired by the correct guidance of the head. Cyrus, though living in a barbarous age, was civilized enough to realize that friendly coöperation is as necessary among nations as it is among individuals.

Yet he was barbarous enough to be a product of his age. His

habitual good nature was punctuated by sudden outbursts of cruelty. He had not as yet learned the primary lesson of all morality—*thou shalt not kill*. Persia was a country in which the warrior was still revered as the highest type of man. Savagery and selfishness were regarded as the noblest of human virtues. The Persians were a restless, aggressive and blood-thirsty race. They dressed in leather from top to toe, they lived on the coarsest of food, and they were taught only to ride and to fight. They looked upon peaceful commerce as beneath their dignity. If they wanted anything, they plundered it. They sneered at those who bought their goods as effeminate creatures; and they regarded Cyrus in his more chivalrous moments as a benevolent fool.

But the folly of Cyrus was leading to a new conception of life. Cyrus was Persian; more than that, he was human.

How strange that man to Heaven should aspire—  
A creature nine-tenths mud and one-tenth fire.

Little by little the divine spark was beginning to defrost the human heart. The barbarous land of Persia was able to produce not only the semi-civilized Cyrus, but the almost civilized Zoroaster.

In Zoroaster's character there was no tinge of cruelty—that is, toward his fellow Persians. "Thou shalt love thy Persian neighbor as thyself." But as for non-Persians, they are a lower species of animals whom "God has deluded into loving *their own countries* so that they will not invade *our country*." It is an interesting commentary on human blindness that the ancient Persians called the Greeks, and the ancient Greeks called the Persians by the same name—*barbarians*. This practice has come down to our own day. The French refer to cockroaches as *Prussians*, and the Germans refer to them as *Frenchmen*. The bulk of humanity has not as yet advanced beyond the ethical conception of Zoroaster.

Indeed, not even *as far* as his ethical conception. For it was Zoroaster who first proclaimed the Golden Rule as a basis for human conduct. "That man alone is good who shall not do unto others whatever is not good unto himself."

And then Zoroaster went on to explain the meaning of the Golden Rule. Human goodness, he said, consists of three parts: *Good Thoughts, Good Words, and Good Deeds*. The good man

must *think* justly, *speak* justly, and *act* justly. He must learn to sympathize with other people's sorrows, and to rejoice in other people's joy. He must "teach friendliness to the enemy (within his own country), righteousness to the wicked, and wisdom to the ignorant." He must put down violence, take a stand against cruelty, and resist the aggressiveness of the despoilers of men. "See to it, O man, that thou hast caused prosperity and joy to flow from thee unto others, and that no pain or injury may issue from thee unto them."

The leaders of men may be roughly divided into three classes—the warriors, the thinkers, and the prophets; those who *compel*, those who *observe*, and those who *serve*. Zoroaster was among the earliest of the prophets. Throughout his life, we are told, he refined his character "in the sacred waters of compassion." He helped the aged; he healed the sick; he fed the hungry; he lightened the loads of the beasts of burden; he wandered among his fellows to comfort them in their hours of distress. His followers began to look upon him—such is the fate of the prophets the world over—as a sort of divine magician, a maker of miracles, a performer of impossible stunts. The only miracle that he performed, however, was to show to his fellows that in a world of so much evil it is possible to practice, as well as to preach, the good life.

But the good life was not as yet within the grasp of Zoroaster's followers. They read his gentle precepts on the holy days, and returned to their brutal practices for the rest of the year. "My enemy Fravartish," wrote the Zoroastrian king, Darius, "was seized and brought before me. I cut off his nose and ears, and I cut out his tongue, and I tore out his eyes. I put him in chains, and exhibited him before the people. Then I crucified him. All this I did with the help and under the protection of God." And the Zoroastrian queen, Parysatis, played dice with her husband for the life of a eunuch. Having won the game, she ordered the eunuch to be flayed alive and used his skin for the upholstering of one of her chairs.

And thus the soul of humanity was still afflicted with the pestilence of evil. But now and then there came a cleansing breath of compassionate words and gentle deeds. One of these prescriptions toward "a saner race in a healthier clime" is to be found in a beautiful Hindu parable. A man was once hunting in a forest where his

vision was obstructed by a heavy fog. Suddenly he beheld through the mist the outline of a frightful and unfamiliar beast. The monster was advancing rapidly upon him. In his panic, the man raised his javelin and hurled it at the animal. The javelin struck home and the animal fell dead.

And then, as the hunter approached his victim, the fog lifted. And to his horror he saw that the "frightful and unfamiliar beast" was his own brother who was coming to visit him from a neighboring town.

This parable may serve as an introduction to the ethics of Buddha—the first man in antiquity whose sympathy extended not only to *all men*, but to *all living things*. If only we could lift the fog of misunderstanding between man and man, we would find that all of us are brothers. Though descended from a race of warrior princes, Buddha "laid aside the cudgel and the sword"—writes one of his disciples—"and ashamed of roughness and full of mercy, he lived in tenderness toward all living things . . . Thus moved he among us as a binder-together of those who were divided, an encourager of those who were friendly, a maker and lover of peace, impassioned for peace, a speaker of words and doer of deeds that made for peace."

He was at all times ready to forgive injuries. For he who injures another is lost in a haze of foolishness. And foolishness deserves pity rather than hate. "If a man foolishly does me wrong, I will return to him the protection of my love."

This Christlike attitude was due not so much to a spirit of humility as to a sense of humor. One day an impudent fellow insulted him. Buddha listened quietly; and when the man was through, Buddha said to him:

"My son, I would like to ask you a question."

"Go ahead!" replied the buffoon.

"Tell me, son," said Buddha, "suppose a man refused a present offered to him, to whom would the present belong?"

"Naturally to the man who offered it."

"Very well, my son," said Buddha, "I refuse to accept your abuse."

He was tolerant with abuse toward himself, but adamant against abuse toward others. "Go into all the lands and preach this gospel. Tell them that men must be courteous toward one another. Tell



them that the poor and the rich, the lowly and the high, are all one, and that all castes and all races must unite in sympathy as the rivers unite in the sea."

All human beings are endowed with a divine dignity, and all living things are consecrated with the spirit of life. The destruction of life, whether in peace or in war, is the greatest of crimes. "Let no one kill any living thing!"

Accept this principle, and you need not know the why and the wherefore of things. Indeed, you *cannot* know. To illustrate this point, Buddha told an interesting parable:

Once upon a time there occurred to a disciple of our brotherhood a question about the four elements. "Where," he wanted to know, "do air, water, fire and wind disappear, leaving no trace behind?"

And perplexed with this question, the disciple set out upon a long journey and consulted all the wise men of all the lands. "Where, O my masters, do the four elements—air, water, fire and wind—pass away, leaving not a trace behind?" And one and all they gave him the same answer: "We do not know."

And the man prayed and fasted and arrived at such a state of ecstasy that he beheld the gods who served at the Throne of Brahma. Yet even the gods could give him no answer to his question. "But ask Brahma, the Supreme Ruler of Heaven and Earth. He will know."

And the disciple prostrated himself at Brahma's Throne, and said: "Where, O Lord of the Universe, do the four great elements melt away, leaving behind no trace of their existence?"

And Brahma said to him: "I am the Lord of the Universe, All Mighty, All Merciful, All Just—the Creator and the Controller of everything that ever was, ever is, and ever shall be."

"All this I know," said the disciple. "But now, O Brahma, I would like to know the answer to my question."

And Brahma, taking the disciple aside so that the attendant gods might not hear Him, replied softly: "I, too, would like to know."

Buddha wasn't interested in knowing what *kind* of world we live in; but he was interested in teaching that it must be a world of *kindness*.

And his disciples, as usual, forgot his teaching and talked about his miracles. He threw a toothpick upon the ground, and it

sprouted into a tree. He uttered a command, and a mountain crumbled into dust. He glanced at a charging elephant, and it turned into a purring cat. He could walk upon the waters, rise into the air, and suddenly disappear in the midst of a speech. One day, together with a group of disciples, he came to a swollen river. Buddha wished himself and his companions across—and presto, they were on the other side!

The disciples multiplied the miracles and lost the man. The precepts of Buddha became frozen into rituals, and the morality of the Hindus went stumbling along side by side with the unenlightened morality of the rest of the ancient world. Humanity kept marching on; but everybody was still out of step with everybody else. India remained, as before, a land of castes and outcasts, of pathetic poverty and unsympathetic wealth, of multitudinous crimes and monstrous punishments. Among the penalties imposed even for ordinary misdeeds were the amputation of the hands and the feet, the pouring of molten lead into the throat, the crushing of the bones with a sledge-hammer, the mutilation of the body with a saw, and the impaling of the victim upon a mattress of spikes. The innocence or the guilt of an accused person was ascertained not through factual evidence, but through the so-called *trial by ordeal*. "Among the trials by ordeal," writes Père Dubois, "is that of the snake, which consists in shutting up some very poisonous snake in a basket in which has been placed a ring or a piece of money which the accused must find and bring out with his eyes bandaged. If he is not bitten, his innocence is completely proved."

One of the strangest customs in ancient India was the "holy prostitution" of respectable young women. It was not uncommon for a mother to dedicate a son and a daughter to the temple—the son to serve as a teacher of devotion, and the daughter as a priestess of pleasure. Both of them were regarded with equal reverence as "servants of the gods."

As for the general attitude of the men toward the women among the ancient Hindus, one of their favorite poems describes the traces made by a lover's teeth in his beloved's flesh. A married woman was obliged to *live for* her husband and to *die with* her husband. For the gods consumed all their good material in the making of man, so that when they came to the making of woman they had to

use odds and ends—such as “the gaiety of the sunbeams and the fickleness of the winds, the sweetness of honey and the cruelty of the tiger, the softness of down and the hardness of stone, the warmth of the fire and the coldness of the snow . . . And having made this creature of contradictions and discontent, they gave her to man to be his plague and his slave.”

Yet it was the men who plagued their women. A Hindu wife had to address her husband as “my God and Master,” to walk several paces behind him in public, to eat only the leftovers from his table, to embrace his feet at bedtime, and to remind herself constantly that “a woman who disobeys her husband will become a jackal in her next incarnation.”

With such a life as their portion, it was hardly any wonder that many of them went “eagerly, as to a wedding feast,” when they were compelled to be burned together with their dead husbands on the funeral pyre.

And thus the march to moral progress went painfully on. “Human wisdom,” wrote a Greek poet, “comes only through human suffering.”

One of the ancient countries that suffered greatly and grew great in wisdom was China. About three thousand years ago a Chinese nobleman, the Duke of Shao, gave voice to his ideal for the happy state under a perfect king. “A king may be said to govern perfectly when poets are free to make verses, dramatists to write plays, historians to tell the truth, ministers to give honest advice, the poor to grumble at taxes, students to learn what they please, workmen to seek a living wage, young people to speak of anything, and old men to find fault with everything.”

This ideal, which even at present has a long way to go before it can become a reality, did much to influence the morals of ancient China. In the earlier period of its history, China suffered no invasions and desired to make no conquests. The soldiers, therefore, were at the bottom of the social scale, along with the butchers and the business men, and the scholars were at the top. Like the Hindus, they had a caste aristocracy. But theirs was an aristocracy of learning, and not of birth. Anybody, even the son of a scavenger, could become a mandarin if he proved himself worthy of nobility “through the proper training of his mind and his heart.” On the

other hand, the son of a mandarin might become a scavenger if he had no propensity for mental application and for spiritual growth.

The mandarins were not an idle class. They entered the civil service and helped the kings to take care of the country. Most of the Chinese provinces therefore enjoyed a fairly intelligent form of monarchy without despotism.

We must not imagine, however, that China in those days was in any sense a utopia. The scholars were not always honest, and the honest men were not always scholars. The Chinese had their allotted share of corruption and stupidity. And of excessive pride. In common with all other men of their period, they suffered from a tribal myopia. Everybody outside of China was a "foreign devil." The early name of China was the *Middle Kingdom*. The Chinese believed that the Lord of Heaven had placed them in the center of the earth because He liked them better than any of the other nations.

Yet in spite of their shortcomings, the Chinese had reached a comparatively advanced stage of civilization a thousand years before Christ. And then they suffered a setback. They came into contact with the Huns—a tribe of savage aggressors from the West. They succumbed to the contagion of militarism, and it took them several centuries to drive the germ out of their system. A series of civil wars was followed by a long period of anarchy. The entire country had gone mad. It had become a welter of disorganized states, each of them determined to destroy the others, and all of them open to attack by the aggressors from the outside.

Fortunately, however, China was able to produce a number of men who had the wisdom and the strength of character to bring their nation back to sanity.

Three of the most important of these men were Lao-tse, Mo-ti, and Confucius.

Lao-tse was the first of the ancients to teach the doctrine of non-resistance to evil as later developed in the New Testament. "If you do not quarrel, no one will be able to quarrel with you . . . Repay injury with kindness . . . To those who are good, be good; to those who are not good, be also good. And thus all will become good . . . To those who are sincere, be sincere; to those who are not sincere, be also sincere. And thus all will become sincere . . .

The softest thing in the world can overcome the hardest, and the weakest can overcome the strongest. There is nothing in the world softer or weaker than water; yet for attacking things that are firm and strong there is nothing more irresistible."

More striking even than the words of Lao-tse are the precepts of Mo-ti. "The mutual attacks of state on state; the mutual usurpations of family on family; the mutual robberies of man on man; the want of kindness on the part of the sovereign and of loyalty on the part of the minister; the want of tenderness and of filial duty between father and son—these, and such as these, are the things injurious to the empire. All this has arisen from want of mutual love. If but that one virtue could be made universal, the princes loving one another would have no battlefields; the chiefs of families would attempt no usurpations; men would commit no robberies; rulers and ministers would be gracious and loyal; fathers and sons would be kind and filial; brothers would be harmonious and easily reconciled. Men in general loving one another, the strong would not make prey of the weak; the many would not plunder the few; the rich would not insult the poor; the noble would not be insolent to the lowly; and the deceitful would not impose upon the simple."

But the real teacher of Chinese ethics was Confucius. He tried to found a morality based upon the square deal. At one time his city was infested with petty thieves and robbers. Some of the leading citizens asked him what to do about it, and he replied: "The only way for you to put an end to stealing, is to put an end to your own greed. For if you are not greedy to have *too much*, others will not suffer from having *too little*. And so there will be no incentive to steal."

Individual integrity, he said, stems out of social justice. "If we live in a country which is just, we can wear our honors with humility and bear our sorrows with equanimity." One day, as he was passing through a mountainous country, he saw a woman sitting by a tombstone. "Why," he asked, "are you here all alone?"

"I am grieving," she replied, "over my only son. He was killed by a tiger."

"And have you no husband to share your grief?"

"He, too, was killed by a tiger."

"Then why do you live in so dangerous a place?"

"Because," she replied, "there is no oppressive government here."

"My daughter," said Confucius, "I understand. Oppressive government is more cruel than a wild beast."

Confucius was not only a theoretical teacher but a practical reformer. Once he was appointed chief magistrate of Chung-tu, capital city of the province of Lu. Whereupon "dishonesty and licentiousness were ashamed and hid their heads. Loyalty became the glory of men, and chastity the splendor of women."

But the world was not yet ready for the millennium. The ruler of the neighboring province of Chi, envious of the greatness of Lu under the leadership of Confucius, hit upon a simple plan to undermine the philosopher's influence with the king. He sent the king a present of eighty "song-and-dance" girls. The plan worked. The king of Lu found a shapely ankle more appetizing than a virtuous heart. "It is time," he said to Confucius, "to be on your way."

Confucius decided to transfer his teaching from the kings to the commoners. He set about collecting, editing, and revising the "sayings of the ancient sages" for the guidance of the people. "If men will learn to govern themselves justly for but a single century, all violence will disappear from the earth."

Accordingly, he laid down a set of definite rules for the government of his people and a host of ceremonial rites for their self-discipline. Every act of life was subjected to the strict observance of an elaborate ritual. The peasant in his hut became a personage of impressive dignity no less than the king in his palace. It was a strange and complicated and, to a western mind, somewhat ridiculous code of etiquette—Confucius called it a *code of ethics*—that he imposed upon his people. For example, he prescribed the different kinds of food that people must eat on different occasions and at different stages of life; the sort of costumes they must wear on sacred and on secular days; the number of bows they must make on saluting one another. "The men must always walk on the right side of the road, the women on the left." He stipulated the thickness of the wood in the coffins, the width and the depth of the graves, and the period and the manner of the mourning.

This system of ritualistic ethics made the Chinese one of the most punctilious nations in history. But it also gave them a sense

of self-respect and a feeling of respect for others. "Be loyal to yourself and charitable to your neighbors." This was the sum and substance of Confucian morality. Instead of an anemic sort of selflessness, he implanted in his people the ideal of an intelligent selfishness. By multiplying your generosity to others, you lay up a capital of generosity for yourself. For, in the long run, every kind act is repaid with interest. Confucius tried to turn the Chinese into a race of aristocrats—not a conceited class of intolerant snobs, but a civilized assemblage of courteous gentlemen. He himself treated the prince and the pauper with equal courtesy—the prince for the majesty of his rank, and the pauper for the nobility of his suffering.

Like Walt Whitman, he liked to hobnob with the failures and to share their burdens. When one of his disciples upbraided him for this "too democratic" habit, he replied, "With whom should I associate if not with suffering men?"

Yet he was no sentimental extremist like Buddha. His sympathies were more practical. They did not extend beyond the human race. "It is impossible," he said, "to withdraw from the world and to associate with birds and beasts who have no affinity with us." He was interested neither in animals nor in angels, but in men.

*Superior* men. The Superior Man of Confucius antedated by twenty-five centuries the Superman of Nietzsche. "The Superior Man moves so as to make his actions in all generations a universal path; he behaves so as to make his conduct in all generations a universal law; he speaks so as to make his words in all generations a universal creed."

Above all things, the Superior Man cherishes four principles: good learning, good conduct, good nature, good will. All of which sums up to the one word—*Justice*. "Treat your friend with mercy, but your enemy with justice." Be fair to your enemy, but do not irritate him with your love. It would only add fuel to his hatred. On the one hand, it is brutal to avenge an injury. But on the other hand, it is foolish to forgive it. Judge it fairly and act accordingly, with due regard to your own dignity and to your enemy's rights. This is the only *just* way in which the Superior Man can deal with his *unjust* neighbors.

When his followers asked him to give a definition of justice, he said: "Is not justice the same as reciprocity?" And when they asked

him to explain this further, he repeated the Golden Rule of Zoroaster: "What you would not have done unto yourself, do not unto others."

With the establishment of this principle among men, he said, "the whole world shall become a Republic . . . Men shall converse sincerely with one another and cultivate universal peace . . . And then they shall no longer regard as their parents only their parents, or treat as their children only their children . . . Every man shall have his rights, and every woman her individuality . . . Selfish schemings shall be repressed and shall find no way to rise again . . . Robbers, filchers and traitors shall no longer infest the earth. This is the state of what I call the Great Harmony."

*The great harmony of mutual understanding*—the final goal of the human quest for the divine. And when will this come? The master, recalling his exile from the kingdom of Lu, smiled sadly and replied: "When I have met with a king who loves Virtue as he loves Beauty."

And in the meantime, whenever he preached among the mighty, Confucius was hooted and stoned. When he arrived at the province of Wei, the prince inflicted a special indignity upon him. He took out his favorite courtesan for a drive and forced Confucius to ride in a carriage directly behind. And the populace shouted gleefully, "Behold Virtue trailing after Lust!" The ruler of another province gave orders to chop down the tree under which Confucius was preaching. "Let it fall upon him and crush out his meddlesome life!" When he came to the province of Chiang, the keeper of the gate wouldn't let him pass. "Don't you know who he is?" said one of his disciples.

"All I know," replied the keeper, "is that he looks like a stray dog."

And the disciple—one of the few who understood Confucius—said: "We pay no attention to his looks; we listen only to his words."

And the disciples are still listening to his words a hundred generations after his death.



*The Ethics of the Bible*

In the ethics of the Bible we can trace the development of human conduct from vengeance to justice, from justice to mercy, from mercy to love.

In the earlier chapters of the Bible, humanity cowers under the whiplash of revenge. "I am the God of Vengeance!" saith the Lord. The ancient leaders provided a rigid standard of morality. And this standard was enforced not in a spirit of love but in a temper of fear. The only way to live is to kill. For food is scarce, and men are blinded with hatred and hunger. He who can hunt and fight the best will survive the longest. The Hebrews invaded Canaan, the "land of milk and honey," to save themselves from starvation in the desert. The law of conquest, of murder, of torture, and of revenge against those who dared to retaliate, was the accepted law of the land.

And then came the moral code of Moses which marked the transition from aggressiveness to possessiveness—from a spirit of vengeance to a sense of justice.

The Mosaic Code was half savage and half sublime. It demanded an eye for an eye, and death for many a petty sin—such, for example, as damage to property and the disobedience of children toward their parents. But it enjoined hospitality toward strangers and charity toward all. Once in every seven years, said Moses (speaking now to a settled rather than to a nomadic tribe), the land must lie fallow in order that the produce may go to the poor. On the Sabbath, all must desist from labor so that not only the hired men but even the beasts of burden may enjoy a day of rest. The time of fighting and of plundering, said Moses, is at an end. From now on, thou shalt not steal and thou shalt not kill.

*Not even thine enemy.* In the Talmud there is a legend to illustrate this point. When the Egyptians were swallowed up in the Red Sea, Moses sang a song of rejoicing. But God—so the legend tells us—rebuked him. "How canst thou sing when any of my children die? From this day on, because thou hast looked with exultation rather than with sorrow upon the sufferings of thy foe, thy songs shall be written in a sorrowful strain."

And this—the legend explains—is why the music of the Jews has always been so sad.

In the ethics of Moses we see man made in the image of a new kind of God. A God of justice. "If a man strike his slave, he must give him his freedom as a recompense for the injury." Indeed, it is unjust under any conditions to keep a man in slavery for too long a period. "In the seventh year thou shalt let thy slave go free, and with gifts. For thou, too, wast a slave in Egypt."

Justice is the foundation of charity. For in giving to the poor, you merely bestow upon them their rightful share of human happiness. "When thou gatherest the harvest of thy land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest. Thou shalt leave them for the poor, and for the stranger, for the widow and the orphan . . . For these are their just due . . . Thou, too, wast a stranger in Egypt."

Suffering spurs men into justice, and justice refines them into mercy. It was in the teaching of Isaiah that the concept of justice became permeated with the spirit of mercy.

Isaiah was the first of the Palestinian prophets—a strange and bold and uncouth succession of radicals who spoke out of turn, defied the rich, scandalized the priests and championed the cause of the underdog. An unsocial lot, they came from every walk of society—lumberjacks, peasants, workers, businessmen and, as in the case of Isaiah, members of the aristocratic class. Rough and ragged outlaws—"we recognize only the eternal laws of the Lord"—these men concealed themselves like wild animals in the mountains, eating roots and honey and at times even flowers and grass, and issuing again and again from their caves to proclaim the imminent damnation of the powerful and the unjust. They not only expressed the most amazing ideas, but they had a most amazing way of expressing them. One of the prophets, for example, defiled his bread before he ate it, as a sign that God would defile His nation. Another, in the presence of a jeering crowd, smashed a costly pitcher over a pile of garbage. "Even so," he cried, "will the Lord smash the mighty of the land!"

Such were the methods employed by the prophets in their effort to arouse the public. Isaiah himself on one occasion walked naked through the streets of Jerusalem in order to emphasize his belief

that the city would be stripped naked for her transgressions. All in all, the prophets were an object of ridicule to most men—especially to those who belonged to the so-called “better classes.”

But the more serious among the people saw another side to these prophets. They noticed that the “eager ambassadors of God” were consumed with a passion for fair play. They possessed a courage that was superb. They were not afraid to speak up to the kings and to denounce them for their misdeeds. They cried out against the empty ceremonials of the priests. “I hate, I despise your prayers and your festivals, and I will not smell the savor of your burnt offerings . . . Banish from me the noise of your psalms . . . But let justice roll on as a flood of waters, and righteousness as an un-failing stream.”

And this spirit of justice, said Isaiah, is to be sweetened with the quality of mercy. Mercy not only toward all Jews, but toward all men everywhere. Purged of their iniquity in the furnace of suffering—declares this first prophet of a United Nations organization—the common people everywhere will “cease to do evil, learn to do good, seek justice, relieve the oppressed, and cultivate a compassionate heart.”

And then Isaiah goes on to picture this Golden Age of universal good will, when “the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the lion’s whelp and the fatling together. And a little child shall lead them . . . For the earth shall be as full of understanding as the waters cover the sea.” In that day even the aggressive nations shall lose their aggressiveness through the abolition of their dictators—“the destroyers shall be destroyed”—and through the dispensation of an equal gentle justice to all the peoples of the earth. *“All the nations shall be unto Me for a blessing,”* saith the Lord, *“for all of them are My children, the work of My hands.”*

And finally Isaiah rises to the topmost peak of his prophetic international morality. “It shall come to pass, in the end of days, that all the nations shall flow into the House of the Lord . . . And He shall judge between the nations, and shall decide their disputes . . . And they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, nor shall the world ever know another war.”

This summit of human justice tempered with divine mercy, declared the later prophets, is to be reached over the highway of love. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," said Hillel. And Jesus elaborated this thought by extending the neighborhood of man to the ends of the earth. In the family of man there is no chosen individual, no preferred group. God is the impartial Father of us all. "I have poured out My spirit upon all flesh." These latterday teachers of the Hebraic morality foreshadowed the democratic ideal of Walt Whitman—the "divine average" of the common man. "I know that the spirit of God"—writes Whitman, echoing the thought of the prophets—"is the brother of my own, and that all the men ever born are also my brothers." And the bond of our brotherhood, the translation of the ethical principle into a practical duty, is—in the words of the prophet Micah—"*to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.*"

### *The Greek Idea of the Good Life*

The early Greek philosophers were of a speculative rather than a practical turn of mind. "Heaven lies about us in our infancy." In their national infancy the Greeks were interested primarily in the nature of the gods, and only secondarily in the conduct of men. Their wise men gave them a scattered number of maxims, but no cohesive system of ethics. Their teaching was metaphysical rather than moral.

The first of the Greek philosophers who attempted to glance from the metaphysical to the moral was Pythagoras. A disciple of the Hindu belief in the transmigration of souls, Pythagoras organized a Brotherhood of Good Men. These men were to live a life of temperance, courage, loyalty, obedience and faith—the stepping stones from a lower to a higher incarnation and from a "liking for men" to a "likeness of God." Pythagoras suggested a morality based upon mathematics and music. Thus, "the essence of justice is a square number"—a somewhat cryptic remark but not so difficult to grasp when we compare it to our own conception of justice as a "square deal." Virtue and friendship, said Pythagoras, are "harmonies"—that is, fusions of human characteristics into a harmonious character, and of human individuals into a harmonious group.

This harmonious intermingling of all human activity, said Pythagoras, is the highest good.

But Pythagoras is wrong, said Heraclitus. The highest good is not harmony, but complacency. Surrender your soul to the Eternal Justice of Heaven, and you will be patient with the temporary injustices of the earth. Live in the realm of reason, and ultimately everything will turn out right. "The part of wisdom is to act faithfully in accordance with the divine laws of Nature." In the eyes of men the world is always at strife. But in the sight of God, everything is "good and fair and just."

This idea, objected Democritus, is also wrong. The highest good is not a "cheerful acquiescence" in the sadness of life, but a dispassionate temper. There is no justice in heaven or on earth. We are the victims of chance. Accept this fact, and make the best of it. In the midst of the world's turmoil, try to remain unperturbed. Learn to know your limitations. Do not overrate your power. Count him as the best of mortals who can keep his ambition down to the level of his strength. Together with Emerson, Democritus might have said, "Why so hot, little man?" Why soar too closely to the sun with your wings of wax? The jealous gods have given you every gift for happiness save one—the ability to extricate yourself from Destiny's inevitable net.

Accept the world at its face value. You live as in a dream for a day; and just when life is at its fairest, the dream is blotted out. Stay close to earth throughout the dream.

Not yours to brave the gale  
In heights above the vale,  
Where thunder to thunder calls  
And the wild-wind brawls.

And you may as well be philosophical about it. Not, as Heraclitus would recommend, *submissive*, but *admissive*. Admit your impotence, sail along with the tide, and keep your temper on an even keel.

This is the philosophy of old age. Instead of doing good or doing evil, Democritus would say, do nothing at all. But the Greeks were a young and vigorous race. A philosophy of inactive contemplation had no appeal for them. Man, said the practical Athenians, is an

ambitious animal, a *vicious* animal. What we must do is to find an ethic that will curb his viciousness without hampering his ambition.

It was to this quest that Socrates and Plato dedicated their lives.

### *Goodness and Justice—the Ideal of Socrates and Plato*

Let us, said Socrates, bring philosophy down from heaven to earth. He was sick of the disputations and the contradictions of his predecessors. "They are like the arguments of a madhouse." Accordingly he tried to find a pattern of reason in the "tumult of philosophical controversy and the insanity of human conduct."

First of all, Socrates set himself to the task of defining the term *justice*. We hear, he said, a good deal of talk about this word. But do we know precisely what it means? And how can we hope to *do* justice until we have learned to *understand* justice? "It is our ignorance of what is consistently right that makes us so persistently wrong."

The beginning of virtue, then, is the knowledge of justice. When the powerful men of Athens condemned him to death, Socrates could say, like Jesus: "Forgive them, Father; they know not what they do." The judges were not guilty of unfairness; they were merely suffering from ignorance. They had not as yet learned the goodness of the soul which, Socrates declared, is the "finest of all goods." If they had learned this lesson, observed Socrates, the Athenians would have raised him to the highest honors instead of sending him to a criminal's death.

This was not an ironic gibe but a sincere statement of fact. And Plato, in his famous *Republic*, proceeded to prove the factual sincerity of Socrates.

And his supreme wisdom. The *Republic* of Plato is a definition of justice as represented in the everyday life of an ideal state. There is hardly a subject of human interest that Plato does not touch upon in his quest for the principles of justice. The universal brotherhood of man, eugenics, socialism, communism, feminism, birth control, free love, free speech, the double and the single standards of morality, the public ownership of wealth, of women, of children—these are only a few of the problems that Plato discusses in the *Republic*. But underlying all these discussions there

is a single purpose—to define justice clearly so that it may be firmly established on earth. Plato's ideal is to see a world in which men like Socrates would be raised from prisoners into princes.

In order that we may get an adequate idea of Plato's definition of justice, let us enter his Republic and examine the life of its citizens from their birth onward.

The children born in the Republic are to be the result of communal mating. The best and the strongest men are to be mated with the best and the strongest women for the sole purpose of producing superior offspring. The men are to possess these women in common. There must be no individual marriages and no private families. As soon as the children are born, they are to be taken away from the parents and placed in a state nursery. "It is essential that the parents should not know their own children, or the children their parents. In this way alone"—maintains Plato—"will universal brotherhood ever become a fact instead of a theory. For everybody in this communal state may be truly regarded as everybody else's brother."

As for the parents, they need not confine their amorous experiences to their allotted mates. They have fulfilled all their marital duties by giving children to the state. If, after that, they desire to "range at will," they are entitled to do so—provided "they try their utmost to abort any embryo which may thus come into being." The matter of free love is thus left to the discretion of the individual—and this applies to women as well as to men. The private life of the citizens is none of the state's business. The sole interest of the state is to see that no citizen should act in such a manner as to injure another citizen.

This, then, is the formula for the guidance of the parents. And now to return to the children.

From their very birth, as we have seen, they are delivered into the keeping of the state. Up to the age of twenty, they all receive the same education. This preliminary education consists largely of gymnastics and music—gymnastics to develop the symmetry of the body, and music to develop the harmony of the soul. The man who has an "unmusical soul"—that is, an *unsound* soul—is not to be trusted. For his mind is crippled, his emotions are unbalanced, and his sense of right and wrong is forever distorted. Music—and to

Plato music meant the harmony of thought and of action as well as of sound—is the underlying principle which keeps the world from falling into disjointed chaos. It is the soul of the universe, just as the planets and the stars are its body. Without music—without harmony—the planets would crash together in an eternity of explosions, and the heavens would be dissolved into a whirlwind of lifeless cinders.

Music, therefore, is the essence of the world's cohesion and the substance of man's education. Up to the age of twenty, everybody in Plato's *Republic* is to be thoroughly grounded in music—and in gymnastics. The children of the "new world" must have a sound body and a singing mind. The schools are to be co-educational. The boys and the girls must learn to work and to play together. All of them alike must strip when they take their exercises; for, as Plato puts it, the women of his ideal state are "sufficiently clad in the garment of virtue." There must be no foolish modesty, and no leering innuendoes, at the sight of the human body. "A beautiful body, like a beautiful mind, is a holy thing."

The education of the children, therefore, is to be divorced from prudery. And from drudgery. Learning is to be made a pleasure rather than a torture. Under the proper teachers, a normal child will enjoy the gymnastics of his mind fully as much as the exercises of his body. A school, therefore, should be a mental gymnasium, an intellectual playground where the children try to excel one another in the fascinating sport of exchanging ideas.

This, then, is to be the education in the Republic up to the age of twenty. After that period there comes a great "weeding out." Those who are incapable of further education are relegated into the lowest class—that is, the farmers, the laborers, and the businessmen—the so-called "baser metal" of the state. Those who are left after the weeding out are to continue with their education.

For the next ten years—that is, from the age of twenty to the age of thirty—they take up the study of the sciences: arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy. These subjects, however, are to be mastered for esthetic rather than for practical purposes. Plato thought it beneath the dignity of the better citizens of his Republic to use arithmetic for bookkeeping or barter. The study of numbers, according to Plato, was good for only two things—to enable the



military commander to acquire the strategy and the tactics of the battlefield; and to enable the philosopher to arrive at the eternal unity through the visible diversity of things. "The soldier and the philosopher alone will ever need to make extensive use of mathematics." All the rest are to study it for esthetic pleasure, not for practical use.

When the study of mathematics and of the other sciences is completed at the age of thirty, there is to be another weeding out. Those who fail to pass the test for still higher training are to be mustered into the middle class—the soldiers. They are to be the guardians of the state. The sharpest sword, believed Plato, insures the strongest peace. Living in a country that was surrounded by jealous and aggressive enemies, Plato was unable to attain to the ethical vision of the Chinese sages, the Hebrew prophets and the Hindu saints. The military class plays an important role in Plato's Republic. A nation without soldiers is as unthinkable to Plato as a nation without slaves. His glorification of war and his sanction of slavery are the two spots that darken the vision of one of the wisest and noblest minds in the ancient world.

And thus we have, in Plato's Republic, a middle class of soldiers, or guardians, in addition to the lowest class of farmers, laborers, and businessmen. The lowest class, we remember, consists of those who, at the age of twenty, are found to be incapable of advanced study. The middle class contains all those who at thirty have proved themselves unsuited for further mental growth. And now the superior students, "the flowers that have been rescued from the weeds," are ready for their final course—the study of philosophy. They are thirty years old. These are the men and the women who will be trained to become the rulers of the state. In Plato's Republic there is complete equality between the sexes. They get the same training, and they are allowed to enter upon the same occupations and professions. After a discipline of five years in philosophy, these picked men and women are to graduate from the "academy of learning" into the "school of life." Here they must get the "feel" of human activity before they are allowed to take a hand in directing it. For fifteen years they must engage in practical affairs until, at fifty, they are ready at last to assume their role of philosopher-kings—and philosopher-queens. For, in the ideal Republic, the phi-



osopher alone is worthy of being the ruler. "Unless philosophers become rulers, or rulers study philosophy, there will be no end to the troubles of men." Both by training and by natural ability the philosophers are the noblest product of the state. And the state must always be governed by the noblest and the best.

These philosopher-governors form the highest class in Plato's Republic, and the other two classes—the men of affairs and the men of war—must obey them at all times. In order to insure the honesty of these public officials, they are to possess no private property. Having no wealth of their own, they will be interested only in the welfare of others. They will engage in no business, hence they will be exposed to no bribes. They will live a communal life—taking their meals in public dining rooms and sleeping together in barracks. These socialistic rulers, in other words, are to have but a single ambition—a *disinterested passion for justice*.

And now we have the complete structure of our ideal Republic. We note the inscription upon its gates—*This is the City of Fair Play*—as we enter it in order to examine some of its more attractive features. First of all, we find here a belief in sanctity without superstition, and in morals without miracles. In the Republic of Plato, religion is based upon reason.

All life here, indeed, is based upon reason—the rational collaboration of men engaged in playing an honest game. Businessmen are regarded with pity, since they of all people find it most difficult to reconcile honesty with success. Criminals, too, are objects of pity. They are restrained, not punished. If a man commits a crime, it is because he has not been properly educated. He is sick through his ignorance of the hygienic laws of the soul. He is a pathetic animal who understands neither the good of his neighbors nor his own good. You cannot make a vicious horse docile by whipping it, and you cannot turn a sullen man into a gentleman by treating him as an outcast. If a criminal is mad, you must cure him of his madness. If he is ignorant, you must teach him. Under no condition must you ever punish him in a spirit of revenge. For vengeance leads us all astray, but kindness brings us always to the right.

To justice. In the Platonic system, justice is never blind. On the contrary, it is the most farsighted policy in the world. For justice—and here we get an echo of Pythagoras—not only brings our indi-

vidual activities and desires into the balance of a wholesome personality, but turns our social ambitions and aspirations into the symmetry of a healthy race. Every citizen in Plato's Republic is a well-adjusted unit in a well-organized system—a system of steady growth with a living soul. For only in this way, said Plato, can we develop a race of men "likest to the gods and best liked by the gods."

Life, then, is a harmony—"the concordant action of diverse elements"—the continual coördination of every man's conflicting appetites under the guidance of reason, and of all men's conflicting interests under the direction of the state. *Justice is obedience*—not to tyranny, but to the better promptings of your own heart and to the best judgment of the wisest men.

### *Goodness and the Golden Mean—Aristotle*

Plato's idea of justice, said Aristotle, might work splendidly in his ideal state. But it cannot be applied to our everyday life. When you spread a thing out, you dilute it. When you extend the conception of brotherhood to an entire community, you turn a close and warm relationship into something scattered and cold. In like manner, when you share the ownership of property among *all* men, you weaken the responsibility of *every* man. What everybody owns, nobody cherishes. As W. S. Gilbert humorously paraphrased it, "When everyone is somebody, then no one's anybody."

Moreover, objected Aristotle, the communal system would deprive life of one of its greatest joys—privacy. Everybody would live like a goldfish in the sight of, and to the disgust of, everybody else. It would be impossible, under such conditions, to exercise the wisdom of justice, or even the virtue of patience. Let us, said Aristotle, forget the theoretical ethics of utopia and concentrate upon the practical morality of the world we live in. "We must assume neither a standard of virtue which is above the attainment of the average man, nor a system of education which is beyond the reach of the average state. We must rather concern ourselves with the life which the majority of individuals can share, and with the forms of government to which the majority of states can attain."

And so Aristotle repudiated the Platonic city of angels and returned to the commonplace region of men.

The goal of every man's conduct, declares Aristotle, is not justice but happiness. "We choose certain standards—such as honor, pleasure, knowledge—because we believe that these standards will make us happy." But what is the nature of happiness? What is it that constitutes "the end and aim of our existence?" The term that Aristotle uses to define this aim is *eudaimonia*—a word that may be translated by the English word *well-being*. But to *be* well, declares Aristotle, is to *do* well. Happiness, in other words, is not a passive state but an active motion. The purpose of life, therefore, is to "perform well" our human functions. To perform them "under the due regulation of reason."

In order that we may thus act for our well-being, observes Aristotle, it is necessary first of all that we acquire a reasonable amount of material wealth. "It is difficult for a poor man to be either happy or good." A fair distribution of private wealth leads to the greatest good of the commonwealth.

Having, then, assured himself of his materials, a man could now attend to his morals. There could now be no serious obstacle to the transformation of his well-being into his well-doing. And the road to this transformation, said Aristotle, is the middle way—the *Golden Mean*. Let us strive to avoid the two extremes of human error as expressed in the fatal words *too much* and *too little*. Let us always choose the rational course that lies midway between them.

For example: When danger confronts us, we have three ways of meeting it. We can resort to the extreme of rashness on the one hand, or of cowardice on the other hand; or we can choose the middle course of courage. Every human action and every human characteristic, declares Aristotle, may be analyzed in this threefold manner of two vicious extremes and a golden mean. Thus, the mid-course between adulation and slander is truthfulness; between conviviality and boorishness, friendship; between passion and passivity, affection; between extravagance and stinginess, liberality; between arrogance and humility, self-respect; between drunkenness and abstemiousness, self-control.

Self-control, temperance, moderation in all things. This, according to Aristotle, is the highest virtue of man. And the safest road to human happiness.

But this road must be used for continual traffic. Self-control must

become the habitual mode of intercourse between man and man. "The virtues are *formed* in man by the *daily performance* of good deeds . . . It is not one swallow or one fine day that makes a spring; and it is not one day or one fine act that makes a happy life."

The happy life, then, is a life of self-control guided by the practical wisdom of the golden mean. We need wisdom—a cultivated sense of perspective—to guide us along the right course. It is not always easy to distinguish between the mean and the extreme. Every man (like every nation) subconsciously thinks that *he* is at the center and that *everybody else*, whether at the right or at the left of him, is on the wrong side. Thus, "the courageous man is called *rash* by the cowardly, and *cowardly* by the rash." In politics, the democrat is called a *fascist* by the communists and a *communist* by the fascists.

The good life, therefore, is based not only upon right action but also upon correct knowledge. And here Aristotle subscribes to the very doctrine which he has rejected in Plato. (In ethics, as in metaphysics, we find a core of agreement at the center of all philosophical disputes.) Unhappiness is the result of bad conduct, which in turn is the result of ignorance. Happiness, on the other hand, is the result of good conduct, which in turn is the result of knowledge. *Knowledge of the harmonious interrelationship between the activities of the individual and the actions of men toward one another.* "He alone is completely happy who, sufficiently equipped with health and wealth and friendship, is active in accordance with his knowledge of complete and harmonious virtue throughout a complete and harmonious life." Such a man will be neither super-normal nor subnormal, but moderately and wisely normal. He will act "at the right times, with reference to the right objects, towards the right people, with the right motive and in the right way." (Quite right, Plato would say to this. Aristotle is now drawing a pretty good picture of my Man of Justice.) The completely happy man, continues Aristotle, "does not expose himself needlessly to danger, but is willing in great crises to give his life if necessary. He takes joy in doing favors to other men, but he feels shame in having favors done to him by other men. For it is a mark of superiority to *confer* a kindness, but of inferiority to *receive* it . . . He does

not speak evil of others, even of his enemies, unless it be to themselves . . . But always his words are stamped with the truth . . . and with a kindly sympathy." The doing of a kind deed, observed Aristotle, is an act not of self-sacrifice, but of self-preservation. For man is a social animal. He loves to identify himself with other selves. "When you see two friends, you see two bodies with a single soul." The kind man is "altruistic because he is wise . . . He never feels malice, and he bears his injuries with dignity." In short, "he is a good friend to others because he is his own best friend."

This philosophy, where it departs from Plato, has been criticized as a treatise on etiquette rather than a system of ethics. Etiquette, someone has remarked, is ethics squeezed dry of its poetry. An ancient writer has called Aristotle "intoxicated with temperance." A life of continuous moderation is like motoring across the continent at twenty miles an hour. There are times when the heart is eager to let itself go, to surrender itself to loyalties and enthusiasms, to become inflamed with a righteous passion or a noble cause. Aristotle's gentleman, solemn, soft-spoken, unruffled and polite, would make an excellent candidate for an undertaker's job. He lacks the Platonic *joie de vivre* that makes the citizen of the Republic so fascinating a person to know. The Golden Mean takes much of the meaning out of the happy life.

Moreover, unqualified moderation is a dangerous doctrine. Moderation in treating with a brutal enemy may give him latitude for further brutality. The entire world exercised moderation while the Germans were overrunning Czechoslovakia and Austria. A dogmatic *no* is sometimes safer than a tolerant *perhaps*. When a man has murdered another man, or committed arson to collect insurance, or stirred up a mob against a defenceless group, or thrown innocent people into a concentration camp, we cannot afford to remain moderate in our indignation. When we see an evil such as an aggressive dictatorship, we cannot—as Aristotle would recommend—try to reform it. There is something within us that urges us to root it out.

Extremes, therefore, are sometimes better than middle courses. We would hardly say to a writer or a painter or a musician or even a bookkeeper that he can afford to be only moderately efficient. How would a patient feel if his doctor or his druggist were to be

only moderately careful in the prescription of a dangerous sleeping drug? In matters of life and death, in many ordinary activities of everyday life, *extreme care* is required rather than *careless moderation*. G. K. Chesterton ridiculed this Aristotelian moderation as the apotheosis of inefficiency. "A man," he said, "may throw himself into a hammock in a fit of divine carelessness. But he is glad that the hammock-maker didn't make the hammock in a fit of divine carelessness."

Yet in spite of the criticism, it was the ethics of Aristotle rather than of Plato that dominated mankind for over a thousand years. For Plato outlined the nobler conduct of a world he dreamed. But Aristotle concerned himself with the practical doings of a world he knew. His ethical system may be full of flaws and contradictions. But somehow it helped mankind to muddle along. Aristotle is the philosopher of the liberal conservatives. Plato is the teacher of the reformers, the martyrs and the saints.

### *The Goodness of Pleasure—Epicurus*

After Plato and Aristotle there came a group of sensualist teachers dubbed by their contemporaries as the "belly philosophers." The wars of Alexander had disorganized human life. All the old ideals had been swept away in a deluge of blood. There was nothing worth living for, since existence was precarious, murder was rampant, and the accumulation of material goods and of good deeds seemed like the meaningless pastime of a madhouse. Eat, drink, and be merry, said the pleasure philosophers, for tomorrow another Alexander may call upon you to die.

An intoxicating life of pleasure, and a speedy death. One of the advocates of "the glad life and the gallant death" was Hegesias, a man whose lectures were forbidden because he had induced many of his students to commit suicide. He himself, it is to be noted, died a natural death at the age of eighty. When he was asked to explain why he refused to practice what he preached, he replied that it was necessary for him to live in order that he might convince other people how good it was for them to die.

In the midst of this moral chaos arose Epicurus, the man with "the soft voice and the soothing words." The pleasure philosophers,



he said, are on the right track—but they are going too fast. The purpose of living, to be sure, is to enjoy life. We have no other business and no other duty in this world. We are not the children of a benevolent God but the stepchildren of an indifferent Nature. Life is the byplay of a mechanical process. But we can turn it, if we will, into an interesting drama.

How? By keeping our pleasures down to the level of tranquillity. By transforming the pleasures of the body into the pleasures of the mind. Epicurus has been unjustly accused of sensuality. "The life you advocate," wrote the Stoic philosopher, Epictetus, "consists of eating, drinking, evacuating, copulating, and snoring." The word *Epicurean* has come to be associated with the luxuries of the table and the licentiousness of the boudoir. Nothing can be farther from the philosophy of Epicurus. Not only was he himself a celibate, but he advocated celibacy—or at least sexual self-restraint—among all his disciples. "Sexual intercourse," he said, "has never done a man good, and he is lucky if it has never done him any harm." As for his eating habits, his tastes were of the simplest. "I am most happy when I live on bread and water, and I spit on luxurious pleasures." Eat and drink little, he said, to avoid the discomfort of tomorrow; and eschew the excesses of passion, to escape the misfortune of a lifetime.

Pleasure, in other words, is the avoidance of pain. More than that, it is the cultivation of a tranquil mind even in the *presence* of pain. "I could be happy," he said almost with a Stoical calmness, "in the midst of torture on the rack."

Avoid or disregard pain, and banish fear. Life, said Epicurus (twenty-two centuries before Darwin), is a ruthless struggle for existence. The earth we live on is rented to us for a little while, and when the time comes for us to move on, we are dispossessed without a moment's notice. But if we cannot conquer death, let us at least overcome the *fear* of death. For "at death the soul is dissolved; and that which is dissolved, is without sensation; and that which has no sensation, is nothing to us." The fear of death, therefore, is a fear of something which is no concern of ours.

Death is no evil. And pain is no evil—if we aim prudently for the quiet pleasures of the mind. "Prudence"—an abbreviation of *providence*, which means *foresight*—"is the most precious of human

goods." For it teaches us not to grasp at the excitements of the moment but to accumulate the satisfactions of a lifetime. "An unruffled state of continued happiness is more important than a boisterous succession of transitory pleasures." Accordingly Epicurus advocated a new kind of joy—the joy of a peaceful mind as it watches from a distance the troubles and the turmoils of life. It is true that life is a bitter gift—so bitter, indeed, that we enter it and leave it with an outcry of pain. Yet even our pain can be turned into a source of pleasure. For not the least of our joys is the memory of our past sorrows.

Try to cultivate, therefore, a sense of humor—that is, a sense of proportion. Notice the majesty of the cosmic spectacle above you and the insignificance of your own troubles. Learn to suffer as an actor in the drama of life; but learn also, as a spectator, to laugh at your own suffering.

Limit your desires. Be satisfied with your destiny. Keep your ambition down to the level of your ability. Simplify your life by reducing your appetites. Cultivate but a single taste—a taste for congenial company. "It is more important to know with *whom* we are to eat than *what* we are to eat." Among his table companions and his pupils he included—an unheard-of scandal in his day—not only poor men, but women and slaves.

Epicurus had a genius for friendship. Indeed, the cultivation of friendship was the keynote of his ethical teaching. The only way to be happy, he said, is to share your happiness with others. The straight line of reciprocity is the shortest distance between two hearts. He advocated this spirit of reciprocity not because it is the most *noble* but because it is the most *expedient* rule of human conduct. "It is not possible to live pleasantly without living generously." Epicurus preached an enlightened selfishness. Do not interfere with the happiness of others, he said, if you do not want others to interfere with your own happiness. *Inflict* no injury that you may *suffer* no injury. Live and let live. Try to make your own community—if you cannot make the entire world—a brotherhood of wisdom united in the serenity of peace.

Avoid excitement. Shun politics. Stay out of war. Refrain from the excesses of hatred and of love. But develop your capacity for friendship. Make a religion of it. Worship it. For friendship is a

sweet and beautiful and holy thing. The sympathy of true friendship is the only certain gift we possess in this world of uncertain values. If the suffering of life can reconcile us to death, the pleasure of friendship can reconcile us to life.

And Epicurus knew whereof he spoke. The sympathy of his friends reconciled him to his own suffering. Poverty, bereavement and disease had turned his entire existence into an "adventure to escape from pain." Yet on the very day of his death he wrote the following letter to a friend: "On this truly happy occasion of my life, as I am about to pass on, I greet you. The disease in my bladder has tormented me to a point beyond which endurance cannot go. But over against this I set my joy in the memory of the conversations I have had with you."

And then, having written this, Epicurus closed his eyes. "I retire tonight," he said, "as I have retired every night for seventy-one years. What does it matter, once I am asleep, whether I shall wake again tomorrow or go on sleeping forever?"

### *The Goodness of Pain—the Stoics*

Epicurus believed that all virtuous deeds are worthless unless they lead to pleasure. But the Stoics maintained that all pleasures are worthless unless they lead to virtuous deeds.

Unlike the Epicureans, the Stoics regarded life as a positive blessing. Pain, they said, is not a *misfortune* but an aid to *good fortune*. It is a hurdle which the gods have put in our path in order that the mind may be strengthened by leaping over it. Evil can hurt only those who admit its power to do harm. Suffering has no reality outside of the mind of the sufferer. Deny it, and—so far as you are concerned—it ceases to exist. The Epicureans had sought pleasure to deaden their pain. But the Stoics turned pain into a living pleasure. They regarded sorrow as an object of divine worship. "They were most happy," said a contemporary critic, "when they suffered the most." They prescribed, for the strengthening of the soul, a bed of hard planks without any coverings and a single tunic of rough cloth that was a torture to the skin. They were the pre-Christian ascetics who tortured the body to elevate the mind.

Yet there was method to their madness. Their policy of joy-in-

sorrow was due not so much to an inferior wit as to a superior wisdom. And their wisdom, like the wisdom of Socrates, consisted in the recognition of the fact that evil is the "weed of ignorance" and goodness is the "flower of knowledge." Ill will, transgression and passion are diseases of the soul—hypnotic states in which the reason is asleep and ignorance runs amuck like a nightmare.

"Knowledge," then, "is the only good; and ignorance, the only evil . . . And wisdom is the ability to choose between the evil and the good."

The good, according to the Stoics, is to perform your duties; that is, to do the things that are "meet and fit"—not in conformity with the customs of man but in accordance with the laws of Nature. For "Nature is the embodiment of Divine Reason." The Divine Creator and Co-ordinator of the world "knows how to even the odd and to harmonize the disharmonious." In His eyes, writes the Stoic Cleanthes, "the mighty are weak; and the unlovely, dear." Hence the *good* within us is the *God* within us. An action that is consistent with the laws of Nature is consistent with the will of God. Such an action, when performed by the individual, is conducive to the common good. "The sage could not stretch out a finger justly without thereby benefiting all other men." And therefore "the sage is as useful to Zeus as Zeus is to the sage." For the wisdom of the sage begets goodness in us all. It brings all of us nearer to the likeness of God.

And the wisest of all human virtues is courage in the endurance of pain. For in this way we not only set a good example; we also serve as a good medicine. There is nothing so soothing to a sufferer as the sight of another sufferer's fortitude. Misery loves company—especially *courageous* company.

But when misery becomes unendurable—maintained the Stoics—it is the part of wisdom to put an end to it. The Stoics considered suicide, under certain conditions, justifiable. When a man is hopelessly mutilated, or inflicted with an incurable disease or an irreparable disaster, it is a sign of Providence that the lease on life is about to be terminated. When a tenant definitely is no longer welcome, it is wise for him to move out.

Suicide, however, must be the final resort. Here too, as in every other human act, the wise man must weigh the alternatives upon

the delicate balance of his reason. It is necessary for him at all times to remember that man lives not for himself but for mankind. So long as he can endure his pain without impairing his usefulness, it is his duty to live on. But when his usefulness is at an end, he becomes only a burden to society. It is his duty to release them from his miseries and his moans.

For the entire human race, said the Stoics, is to be regarded as one family. The wise man, in the happy phrase of Professor Sidgwick, is a "cosmopolitical animal." It is his business, as a citizen of the world, not only to *refrain* from injuring his fellows, but to *protect* them from injury. Goodness, in other words, must be active, not passive. It is not enough to eschew evil; it is necessary to do good. The aspiration of the wise man is to do the greatest amount of good to the greatest number of people in the foolish and fighting and suffering society of his fellow men.

This Stoic doctrine, in spite of its puritanical devotion to a sense of duty without beauty, was nevertheless an advance beyond the horizon of the earlier Greek morality. For it recognized the equality of all men before God. It was no accident that two of the leading Stoic philosophers, Epictetus and Aurelius, lived at the two extremes of worldly rank.

### *The Optimistic Slave—Epictetus*

One day the master of Epictetus, a man of subtle cruelty, amused himself by twisting Epictetus' leg. "If you go on," said Epictetus, "you will break it." The master went on, and the leg was broken. "Don't say I didn't warn you," remarked the slave mildly. "I hope you will know better the next time."

The *Handbook of Epictetus*—"don't hate your enemy, but teach him"—was used as a manual in the early Christian Church. "Do you lament the fact that you are a slave? In his earthly body even the king is a slave." Every man "is a little soul carrying around a big corpse." The body is tied to the servitude of the earth, but the soul is free in the service of God. And in this service, all of us are God's kinsmen. If you were a relative of Caesar, you would feel safe under his protection. How much safer should you feel under the protection of God!

Under God, no harm can befall us. "Must I die? I am only returning my body to the earth. Must my child or my wife die? They are returned." Whatever happens to us is only an *external* evil. A bruise to the body is but a rent in the garment that envelopes the soul. "Suppose I am injured, or imprisoned, or suffer exile. I can accept these sufferings with a smile as being of no concern to me. For my soul can never be injured or put into chains except through my own ill will . . . These are the thoughts that he who would be wise should write down day by day."

Steer your course by the guiding star of wisdom, and you will befriend all and be afraid of none. "When you appear before the mighty of the earth, remember that One Mightier and Wiser looks down from above. You must obey *Him* rather than *them*."

In other words, you must always live up to your duty as a true Stoic.

And what is a Stoic? "Show me a man whose deeds are modeled after the pattern of his words—a man who is sick and yet happy, in peril and yet happy, dying and yet happy, in exile and happy, in disgrace and happy . . . Show me the soul of a man who desires to be at peace with his fellows, who endeavors to blame no one, to fail in no worthy action, to be free from anger, envy and jealousy, to forget his own misfortune so that he may alleviate the misfortune of others . . . Show me a man who longs to change his manhood to Godhood . . . Show me such a man, and by Heaven I will say—*This is a Stoic*."

### *The Pessimistic Emperor—Marcus Aurelius*

The Stoic emperor agreed with the Stoic slave that "men exist for the sake of one another." Yet owing to his station—such is the perversity of man—he was fain to emphasize the *poverty* of the *rich* life, just as Epictetus was moved to emphasize the *richness* of the *poor* life. "Despair not in thy misery," said Epictetus. And Aurelius retorted, "Exult not in thy happiness."

For these two attitudes are the reverse sides of the ethics of Stoicism. It takes as much soul-strength to be humble in the possession of power as to be heroic under the oppression of fate.

Marcus Aurelius was one of the most powerful of the Roman

emperors. He was therefore in a good position to know that "all is vanity." When he ascended the throne, he found himself heir to dissensions and conspiracies and wars which the earlier emperors had begun but had not been given the time to finish. Aurelius, therefore, was compelled to devote his entire life to the straightening out of quarrels that were not of his own making. Hailed as the master of the world, he was yet tied as with chains to the follies and the crimes of his ancestors. The so-called "Happy Warrior" of Rome was one of the saddest of men in the ancient world.

He despised his role as a conqueror. "A spider," he wrote, "is proud when it has caught a fly, one man when he has caught a poor hare, another when he has taken a little fish in a net, and another when he has taken wild boars or bears, and another when he has captured Sarmatian prisoners in battle. But are they not brigands all?"

As a philosopher, Marcus Aurelius was—in his own words—"a brother to all men, a citizen of the world." But as an emperor, he was merely a Roman. One of his generals, Avidius Cassius, formed a conspiracy to kill him. When Aurelius was told about this, he refused to make a move against Cassius. "Why should I persecute my friend on a mere suspicion?" If the man was guilty, said Aurelius, he would suffer the consequences of his own folly. The conspiracy failed, and Cassius was assassinated. The retainers of Aurelius, and even his wife, Faustina, implored him to execute the family of Avidius Cassius in order to insure his own safety. But the emperor paid no attention to them. "There is no reason why children should be made to suffer for the sins of their father." A bundle of letters, written by Cassius and implicating several other Romans in the conspiracy, was brought to Aurelius. Without so much as looking at the letters, he consigned them to the flames . . . And then, buckling on his armor, he led his Roman legions into their next orgy of bloodshed upon the battlefield. "I am a prisoner of war," he said.

The Stoic emperor, Aurelius, was unable to reach the heights attained by the Stoic slave, Epictetus. For Aurelius had a more difficult road to follow. Epictetus merely had to shut his eyes to his own suffering. But Aurelius had to shut his heart to the sufferings of other people. To the sensitive soul it is more painful to

*inflict* than it is to *suffer* an injury. To judge from the writings of these two men, the emperor was a more pitiable character than the slave. "The whole world," said Aurelius, "is a vapor. Life is nothing but a warfare and a stranger's sojourn in a foreign land . . . Of human existence, the time is a point, and the fortune is in a flux, and the perception dull, and the body subject to decay, and the soul a puff of wind, and fame a bauble of no value . . . What is it to be remembered after you are dead? An empty thing."

Happiness, too, like pain, is evanescent. Let us therefore, said the Stoics, remain undaunted in the presence of our fate. We are in the hands of the Gods. Our life is a fulfilment not of our own will but of theirs. "If the Gods took counsel about me and what should befall me, doubtless their counsel was good . . . If they have not taken counsel about me in particular, they certainly have done so about the common interest of the Universe, and I therefore should accept cheerfully and contentedly the fate which is the outcome of their ordinance."

The Gods know best. Whatever is, is right—not, perhaps, for you and for me as selfish individuals, but for all of us as interrelated parts of a single living organism. Who can understand, in the intricacy of this organization called the human race, the relative importance of each of the component units? All we know is that the proper functioning of the whole—in other words, *the united happiness* of the whole—depends upon the generous coöperation of the parts. "Men exist for the sake of one another. Remember this, follow the Gods, and love your fellow men. For the principle of love is the Law of Life."

*The Moral Law.* The human instinct for harmony which lies at the basis of all ethical teaching. However much the various teachers may quibble about the unessential things, they are at one in this essential respect: The advance of human *thought* is measured by the advance of human *thoughtfulness*. Wisdom is identical with goodness; and this is not an individual possession, but a social action. The profoundest of philosophers, if he lives in a cave, is of no earthly good either to others or to himself. The lessons of morality can best be acquired in the market-places of the world. For there the individual learns that in cheating his fellow-market-ers he is only cheating himself.



*The Christian Interpretation of Morality*

Humanity, said the Christian teachers, is a community—a common partnership in the exercise of the Moral Law, which is the Eternal Law of God. It is one of the ironies of history that the Christian disciples of Jesus took their inspiration from the pagan disciples of Plato and in turn served as the inspiration for the atheist disciples of Lenin. Yet the phenomenon is not so strange when we remember the universal human instinct to establish co-operation in the place of competition. Every once in a while the human family tries the experiment in communal living, under different conditions and in different countries. Thus far the experiments have failed. But the Spirit of the World is patient. "Not yet, my children. Live a little more, learn more, suffer more—and try again."

The Christian teachers believed in a human conduct dependent upon a divine code. This code had been handed down from Heaven through a succession of prophets from Moses to Micah, had been exemplified in the divine life of Jesus, had been clarified into rational understanding by Philo, a Jewish disciple of Plato, and had been put into everyday practice by the early Christian communists—men who lived in communion with one another "under the universal guidance of God."

In their effort to obey the laws of God, the early Christians felt constrained at times to disobey the laws of the land. "Morals are from Heaven; manners are of the earth." Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's—but not when they clash with the injunctions of God.

These injunctions, finding their noblest expression in the Sermon on the Mount and in the Epistles of Saint Paul, are based upon the triangular structure of Faith, Hope and Charity.

Faith is the indispensable prelude to all good conduct. The Greeks had taught that goodness is based upon knowledge; the Christians, that it is founded upon trust. What we need is not a clear mind but a pure heart. A heart that through its own nobility beholds the nobility of the world. A soul attuned through piety to pity. Man is created in the image of a merciful God. It is his business to fulfill the promise of that creation. This applies not only to

the *wise* man but to *every* man. Morality is no longer a problem for discussion by the learned; it is a revelation for the guidance of all. Christianity has carried ethics from the heights down to the haunts of the common man. And in so doing, Christianity has enabled the common man to reach the heights. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Have faith in God, and the faith shall blossom into hope.

Hope is the heritage of heaven which all men may share alike. "Ask, and it shall be given; seek, and ye shall find . . . What man of you, who, if his son shall ask him for a loaf of bread, will give him a stone? . . . How much more shall your Father in Heaven give good things to them that ask Him?" That is, things good in God's eyes rather than in yours. If your prayer is not granted, have faith that it is for the best, and live in hope that all your *merciful* prayers will be *mercifully* answered.

Prayers, that is, for the *common* rather than for the *private* good. Even faith and hope are useless if they are not translated into charity. The entire Law of Heaven, the entire teaching of the prophets, may be summed up in the words of the Golden Rule: "Whatsoever you would that men should do unto you, even so do you unto them."

And this Golden Rule—contrary to the misinterpretation of some—applies not only to Christians but to all men, "even to the Jew and the Greek." For, as Saint Paul writes in his Epistle to the Romans, this Golden Rule represents "the righteousness of God from faith unto faith . . . There is no respect of persons with God . . . He is the same Lord of all." It is our human duty, therefore, to live—as Lincoln summarized it in his Christlike simplicity—"with malice toward none, with charity for all."

Christianity, observed Bernard Shaw, has not failed. For it has not as yet been tried. Saint Paul, when he spoke to his followers, knew that he was speaking "unto babes," and that he could feed them "only with milk, and not meat." His ideal Christian—at bottom but little different from the ideal Chinese or Hindu or Hebrew or Greek—was "a mark to be aimed at, rather than a goal as yet attained." This perfect Christian will "think of himself no more highly than of others." He will recognize and act upon the fact that "all men are members of one body and members one of another

. . . He will give with liberality, work with diligence, show mercy with cheerfulness and love with a full heart . . . He will rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, steadfast in prayer, and fervent in hospitality . . . He will give food to his enemy's hunger, and drink to his thirst." For, in so doing, he will "heap coals of fire upon his head." This ideal Christian will "overcome evil with good, salute his neighbors with a holy kiss, and enlist as a fellow-worker with God in the establishment of peace among men."

Above all, the ideal Christian will translate the injunctions of the Lord into the commandment of love. The entire Golden Rule, the sum total of the Christian creed of faith and hope and charity, may be condensed into the one word—*love*. "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass, or clanging cymbal. And if prophecy I have, and all mysteries I know and all knowledge, and if all faith I have so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And if I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body for glory's sake, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing." For prophecy may be false, glory may fade, tongues may grow silent, and knowledge may be forgotten—"but love faileth not."

Love your neighbor as yourself. For the meanest of your neighbors, no less than the mightiest of the earth, may be purified through love into "a holy temple of God."

### *The Eight Steps of Charity—Maimonides*

It took the Jewish philosopher, Maimonides, to interpret the Christian creed of love into a practical code of life.

The good life, said Maimonides, is more than a passive aspiration; it is an active motion—a reaching upward for spiritual nobility through the exercise of practical humility. "The spirit of man is ascending to Heaven over the eight golden steps of the Ladder of Charity." These eight degrees of Charity, as enunciated by Maimonides, are as follows:

"*The first* and lowest degree is to give, but with reluctance or regret. This is the gift of the hand, but not of the heart.

"*The second* is, to give cheerfully, but not proportionately to the distress of the sufferer.

"*The third* is, to give cheerfully and proportionately, but not until solicited.

"*The fourth* is, to give cheerfully, proportionately, and even unsolicited, but to put it in the poor man's hand, thereby exciting in him the painful emotion of shame.

"*The fifth* is, to give charity in such a way that the distressed may receive the bounty, and know their benefactor, without their being known to him. Such was the conduct of some of our ancestors, who used to tie up money in the corners of their cloaks, so that the poor might take it unperceived.

"*The sixth*, which rises still higher, is to know the object of our bounty but to remain unknown to them. Such was the conduct of those of our ancestors who used to convey their charitable gifts into poor people's dwellings, taking care that their own persons and names should remain unknown.

"*The seventh* is still more meritorious—namely, to bestow charity in such a way that the benefactor may not know the relieved persons, nor they the names of their benefactors, as was done by our charitable forefathers during the existence of the Temple (in Jerusalem). For in that holy building there was a place called the Chamber of the Silent, wherein the good deposited secretly whatever their generous hearts suggested, and from which the poor were maintained with equal secrecy.

"*Lastly, the eighth*, and the most meritorious of all, is to *make charity unnecessary by preventing poverty* . . . This is the highest step and summit of charity's golden ladder."

In this final step we find the first historic recognition of society's obligation toward the individual's need. Generosity is no longer a private duty; it is a public concern. And charity is no longer a temporary *cleansing*; it is a perennial state of *cleanliness*. It is the business of society, through concerted action, to provide for an economic structure in which no man shall be left out in the cold.

And thus we see the kindness of man gradually paving the way toward the regeneration of mankind. The spiritual development of each is bound up with the material stability of all.

When first the body has been clothed and fed,  
How easy then to teach the heart and head!

*The Selfless Morality of Saint Francis*

And now we come to one of the most adorable characters in history. Saint Francis wrote no treatise on human conduct; but his whole life was an open textbook on love. Saint Francis showed that supreme goodness is compatible with supreme happiness, and that to follow in the footsteps of Christ does not necessarily mean martyrdom on the Cross. The son of a wealthy cloth-merchant, Saint Francis forswore his riches for the sake of righteousness. As a young man, he had fought and feasted and swaggered his way through life after the manner of the gilded youth of his day. But, during a convalescence following a long and serious illness, he had a chance to "think it out." The serenity of the great stars above, and the struttings of the little men below. He decided thenceforth to live a life in singing harmony with the stars.

It was literally with a song on his lips, we are told, that he left his paternal roof one day and went out into the frost—it was midwinter—protected only by a ragged cloak. Having given up his boisterous pleasures in the company of the elect, he now went forth to seek a quieter but deeper happiness in the society of the rejected. He dedicated his life to the dispensation of good cheer. His heart went out especially to the failures, the unfits and the misfits, those who couldn't "get on" in life—the weak whom nobody would employ, and the meek whom nobody would heed. "He gives a hearing," it was said of him, "to those who have failed to get a hearing from God himself." But Francis was too good a Christian to subscribe to so blasphemous a characterization of his mission. "I listen to all those whom God in His mercy has sent to me in their distress."

Saint Francis regarded himself as the richest of men. For he was completely satisfied with his lot. Indeed, the less he had, the more contented he felt. "How could I be happy in my possessions when so many others possess nothing at all?" His happiness was so great because he thought so little of himself, and so much of his fellows. When he got food, he kept the smallest and the coarsest portion for himself, and gave the rest of it away. For clothing he wrapped himself, both summer and winter, in his ragged brown tunic, tied

around the waist with a rope. It was the proud uniform of a soldier of Christ enlisted in the crusade of healing and mercy.

True to his Christian training, Saint Francis developed a clean heart rather than a clear mind. His secular education was of the scantiest. Living in the stormy period of the Crusades, he had no desire to understand the quarrels of the world. He merely believed in the brotherhood of man. Inspired by this belief, he paid a personal visit to the Sultan and to the Pope in an effort to put an end to the carnage of the (Fifth) Crusade. "Jerusalem, like the human heart, is big enough to embrace the shrines of all the Children of God." But he failed in his mission of peace. The world was not yet ready to listen to common sense.

Shrugging his shoulders, Saint Francis returned to his other job—his mission of love. The love of Saint Francis embraced the world, for everything within it was to him inter-related and alive. Like a child he regarded the birds as his little sisters, the wind and the sun as his brothers, and the earth as the living mother of them all. In his naïve adoption of the world into the family of men, Saint Francis spoke not only *of* his little sisters, the birds, but he spoke *to* them. On his way home from the Sultan, he met a flock of birds. Enthralled with the music of his "chattering little kinsfolk," he decided to repay them with a music of his own. "Little sisters, if you have now had your say, it is time that I also should be heard." And he went on to tell his aerial congregation about the Song of the Gospel—the story of the Christian revelation of peace on earth and mercy toward all living things. "You, too, my winged little sisters, can live the Christian life."

His entire career was a mixture of the simple and the sublime. He was losing his sight, and the doctors informed him that the only way to save him from total blindness was to cauterize one of his eyes. When they took the red-hot iron from the furnace, he spoke to it as to a living and loving comrade who is compelled to perform a painful operation. "Brother Fire," he said, "God made you beautiful and useful and strong. I pray you, be courteous with me."

Courtesy was the dominant note in the ethics of Saint Francis. It included all the other virtues—such as faith, hope, justice, mercy, goodness, purity and love. It represented the duty and the happiness of the true aristocrat—the courtier in the Kingdom of Heaven.

To Saint Francis the whole world was a world of kings, and he was their one willing subject.

### *The "Practical" Ethics of Francis Bacon*

Saint Francis was pure, but unworldly. His ethic was possible for the exceptional but not for the ordinary man—the man whose behavior is constantly being put to the acid test of the competitive life. Francis was a celibate, and only a celibate can afford to be a saint. The man with a family to support is obliged to season his heavenly aspiration with a sprinkling of earthly sophistication. After the sublime example of Saint Francis, the world returned to the more human teaching of Francis Bacon. "I believed myself born for the service of mankind," he wrote in his *Interpretation of Nature*. "But my birth, my rearing and education had all pointed, not towards philosophy, but towards politics . . . I conceived the hope that, if I held some honourable office in the state, I might have secure helps and supports to aid my labors, with a view to the accomplishment of my destined task."

Man, in other words, must stoop to conquer. The flower of virtue, believed Bacon, must in this material world of ours be rooted in the mud. But, said he, we may as well be practical about it. Accepting our material limitations, we can still cultivate our spiritual life into something beautiful and noble and good. "At heart we all have a kind of kinship and connection with the truth."

Yet the truth may be all things to all men. To Saint Francis it was a manifestation revealed by a pure faith. To Bacon it was a discovery apprehended by a clear mind. "The mind is the man, and knowledge mind; a man is but what he knoweth."

Goodness, declares Bacon, returning to the conception of the Greeks, is knowledge. "Is it not knowledge alone that doth clear the mind of all perturbations?" And the greater the knowledge, the less we depend upon faith—or, as Bacon would term it, opinion. It is not a childish faith in human goodness, but a mature knowledge of human evil, that will enable us to steer a safe course through life. Man is a peculiar combination of saintliness and sin. He joins "the wisdom of the serpent to the innocence of the dove." Let us recognize this duality of our nature. Let us not be, as the Italians would

say, *tanto buon che val niente*—so good that we are good for nothing. The Stoics had advocated a life in accordance with nature. Bacon emended the word *nature* to *human nature*. "Let not a man trust his victory over his (human) nature too far." For, however long and deeply buried, it will "revive upon the occasion or temptation." All of us are like "Aesop's damsel, turned from a cat to a woman, who sat very demurely at the board's end, till a mouse ran before her."

And here Bacon advocates a peculiar kind of morality in the presence of temptation. "Let a man either avoid altogether the occasion (presented by the temptation), or put himself often to it, that he may be little moved with it." In other words, Bacon would say, let us aim at temperance by frequent surrender to intoxication; at honesty, by excessive yielding to thievery; at gentleness, by repeated capitulation to murder. This is the philosophy of Machiavelli rather than the ethics of Christ. And Bacon was frankly aware of this fact. "We are beholden to Machiavel, and writers of that kind, who openly and unmasked declare what men do in fact, and not what they ought to do." The Machiavellian philosophy of Bacon was intended to cater to man's weakness, whereas the Christian ethics of Saint Francis had appealed to man's strength. Bacon, like Francis, was true to his own nature. Saint Francis, judged by the average human standards, was a man of too little ambition: Francis Bacon, assessed by the same standards, was a man of too great ambition. Having sent his friend and benefactor, Lord Essex, to the executioner's block, he was himself sent to the Tower on the charge of taking bribes. Referring to his conviction on this charge, Bacon observed with philosophical sincerity: "It was the justest sentence in Parliament these two hundred years."

The moral code of Francis Bacon was not so practical after all. Saint Francis, it has been observed, was all heart and no head. Francis Bacon was all head and no heart. Allowing for epigrammatic exaggeration, there is a great deal of truth in this criticism. What the world needed then—what it needs today—is a moral teacher with a level head and a lovable heart.

This teacher arose in the person of Spinoza.



*Spinoza's "Intelligent Love of God"*

Spinoza tried to bring the Jews and the Gentiles to a higher plane of mutual understanding. He succeeded only in getting the Jews to excommunicate him, and the Gentiles to treat him with disdain. Inspired by what was perhaps "the truest vision ever had of God," he was stigmatized everywhere as an atheist. For he spoke a language too mature for the adolescent mentality of his generation. The human race still needed considerable growing up.

Spinoza's main concern in life was to demonstrate the bond of good fellowship that exists between our better selves. All men, he said, are moved instinctively to an "intellectual love of God"—that is, an intelligent and fraternal affection toward their fellow men. For all of us partake of the nature of God. "He who clearly and distinctly understands his divine nature" will yield himself up to this "infinite love" which emanates from God and embraces all living things.

This infinite love is the basic morality that leads to the ultimate objective in life—human happiness. "A man's happiness consists in this, that his power—his zest for living—is increased." And this increased power can come about only through the "love of self"—not the exclusive self of the individual, but the inclusive self of the entire race.

Love begets love, and hatred begets hatred. Every act of revenge sows the seeds of further revenge; and so on and on, until some one is sane enough to shame hatred, through forgiveness, into love. "He who wishes to revenge injuries by reciprocal injuries will be always unhappy." For he will live—as the world is living today—in a perpetual atmosphere of suspicion and retaliation and war. "But he who endeavors to drive away injuries by forgiveness"—and by forgiveness Spinoza meant not abject submission but enlightened education—"will fight with pleasure and confidence . . . For those whom he conquers will surrender joyfully." The greatest victories, maintained Spinoza, are to be won "not by force of arms but by nobility of soul."

And who is to say that Spinoza was not in the right? The United Nations, by force of arms, have won a great war. Will it not require

nobility of soul to maintain a great peace? Force leads to resistance; and resistance, to further force. Violent revolutions result in violent counter-revolutions. Suppose, however, some one were to try a non-violent revolution for a change—the peaceful transformation, let us say, of an empire held together by force, into a group of free nations united in reciprocal friendship based upon mutual respect. Would not this be the most successful of revolutions in history? Would not all men concerned, the liberated and the liberators alike, be the equal beneficiaries of such a change? Would not such an ethic result in the tightening rather than in the loosening of the bond between nation and nation and between man and man?

This, at least, was the conviction of Spinoza. Hatred, rancor, malevolence, oppression, vindictiveness, jealousy, greed—these are merely the symptoms of a spiritual myopia. We are unable to see beyond the sunset of today. Just as the trees conceal the forest, so do our goods conceal our good. All too frequently we mistake our disadvantages for our advantages. "Many of our (moral) ideas are mutilated and confused." We judge our well-being by temporary rather than by permanent standards. We forget that our gain at this moment may prove to be our loss in the long run.

We must cultivate the proper perspective. (And in spite of our imperfect vision, believed Spinoza, our eyes are instinctively directed toward the right spot.) We must judge the consequences of our actions not only for a moment or a day, but for a lifetime. The lifetime of the human race—of the universe. For we are children of eternity, and it is against this backdrop of eternity that we play our little parts in this world. Bearing this in mind, we can hope at last to attain true freedom. Freedom from passion and fear—"a free man fears nothing, not even death;" freedom from tyranny and slavery—"a free man is master of himself, servant of none;" from hatred and spite—"when you and I are free, why should we hate or despise each other?" Freedom from ignorance, misunderstanding, prejudice and doubt. "Knowledge leads to forbearance, and forbearance to further knowledge . . . Hence the free man, in judging others, will try neither to execrate nor to condemn, but to understand." And, above all, freedom from petty selfishness. "The free man will desire nothing for himself which he will not also desire for the rest of mankind."

*The Law of Nature and the Rule of Man—Hobbes*

All morality, maintained Spinoza, springs from the fact that man is a *social* creature. No, objected Hobbes. All morality springs from the fact that man is an *unsocial* creature. "If any one doubts the unsociality of man," said Hobbes, let him consider his own attitude toward his neighbors. "When taking a journey he arms himself; when going to sleep he locks his doors; when even in his house he locks his chests; and this when he knows there be public officers, armed, to revenge all injuries that shall be done him."

Every man for himself and the devil take the hindmost. This, declared Hobbes, is the tacit understanding upon which every society bases its ethical code. Man is a self-centered animal groping "toward" pleasure and "fromward" pain. And pleasure in nothing more than the experience or the exercise of power.

Now there are two kinds of power: that which impels us to malevolence, and that which leads us to benevolence. If left alone, said Hobbes, man is an impulsive creature of evil. Even the most "unselfish" of our emotions are merely the manifestations of our malicious self-regard. Our so-called "pity" for the calamity of others is nothing but grief at the picture of a similar calamity befalling ourselves. "Alas, poor Yorick"—this skull is but the picture of my own skull a few years from now. Therefore let me get the most out of life while the flesh is still upon it. This, believed Hobbes, is the only aim of man. His so-called "altruism" is a social inclination used merely as a means toward personal ambition. "All society is either for (the individual's) gain or glory." We seek friends for our own ends. *Mutual help* is nothing but *self-help*. "Infants have need of others to help them live; and those of riper years, to help them to live well." What every man wants, therefore, is not *communion* but *dominion*. He is an unsocial socialist. He accepts social—that is, moral—obligations because without them he would be lost. Men organize themselves into societies because in union there is strength—for the individual. They accept laws which will enable themselves to get ahead *as far as possible* and which will at the same time prevent others from getting ahead *too far*.

For there is no love lost between man and man. Our natural tend-

ency is to injure one another. But our instinct for self-preservation prompts us to keep such injuries down to a minimum. We thus modify our lust for power through our fear of retribution. And so we become organized from a primitive state of war, in which "every man's hand is against his neighbor's," into an intelligent covenant of peace, in which every man *respects* because he *fears* his neighbors.

This, maintains Hobbes, is the origin and the purpose of government. The authority of the government—and to Hobbes this authority meant the will of the king—must be accepted as the sovereign judge of human conduct. It is the "final measure" of right and wrong for every individual. Morality, therefore, is not a divine duty that grows upon us from within, but a human obligation that is imposed upon us from without. The law of the land is the only law which man, as a selfish but rational creature, must learn to obey.

### *The Rule of Man and the Will of God—Locke*

The mistake of Hobbes, said Locke, is that he confuses the principle of justice with the sovereign's judgment. It is true that "good and evil are nothing but pleasure and pain." But the determining factor as to what is pleasurable or painful for the individual or for society is not the law of the king but the will of God. Morality is not an *imposition*; it is an *intuition*. We have an instinct for justice—a fellow-feeling for one another's rights independently of any sovereign's decisions. For sovereigns are human and therefore fallible. Man-made laws are subject to the temptations and the limitations of their makers.

But the laws of God are based as firmly, and they are as decisively subject to demonstration, as the principles of mathematics. "The idea of a Supreme Being, infinite in power, goodness, and wisdom, whose workmanship we are, and upon whom we depend, and the idea of ourselves, as understanding rational beings . . . would, I suppose, if duly considered and pursued, afford such foundations of our duty and rules of action as might place morality among the sciences capable of demonstration; wherein, I doubt not, but from self-evident propositions, by necessary consequences as incontestable

ble as those in mathematics, the measures of right and wrong might be made out."

Among the "self-evident propositions of right and wrong"—to mention only a few—are the following:

All men are born free and equal. Hence no man has a right to look down upon his fellow men.

It is our God-given duty to help rather than to harm one another.

Contracts, verbal as well as written, are sacred; they must never be terminated except by mutual consent.

Parents have a right to control their children, just as they have a duty to educate them, but only until the children have arrived at the age of reason.

The goods of the earth are common to all. They may become the private property of one who has "mixed his labor" with them, *provided* "there is enough and as good left in common for others."

This last pronouncement is a new note in ethics. It is the declaration, based upon the "intuitive law of divine justice," that the individual has a double duty to society: first, to appropriate nothing for which he has not labored; and second, to take only his fair share so that others, too, may enjoy their share.

Good conduct, in other words, is that kind of behavior which leads—just as Hobbes had observed—"toward happiness and fromward pain." But—as Hobbes had *failed* to observe—the moral law requires that the conduct of the individual should lead to *the greatest happiness of the greatest number and the lessening of pain for all*.

### *Kant's Definition of the Moral Law*

Like John Locke, Immanuel Kant believed that we have an intuitive knowledge of right and wrong. He called this intuitive knowledge the *categorical imperative*. Translated into everyday English, this means that good conduct is an absolute commandment from within. Mutual kindness is a *must*. We are spiritually *bound* to one another. Our conscience—call it our soul if you will—is born with the birth of our body. We know instinctively that we ought to do our duty. For this "stern daughter of the voice of God"

not only prompts our hearts toward the right ends but guides the stars in their appointed course.

Human duty, in other words, is the clear demand of a divine eternal law. And this law, observes Kant, can be reduced to a single simple maxim: *Conform your actions to a principle which you would like to see established as the principle for the actions of all other men.* That is to say, do unto others as you want *everybody else* to do unto others. This means the extension of morality from the individual to the universal point of view.

For example: If I am tempted to break my promise, my conscience—which acts as the interpreter of the categorical imperative—tells me that I don't want to see promises broken as a universal practice. For such a practice would mean the breakdown of all agreements, of all understanding, of all decent relationship between man and man. The world would become a jungle of snarling beasts. On the same principle, the categorical imperative condemns aggressiveness, cupidity, intolerance, extortion, treachery, malevolence, murder, theft. And for the same reason, it sanctions the virtues which are opposed to these vices. Our conscience is an infallible guide to our actions. It warns us unconditionally to avoid such behavior as would make social life impossible, and it unconditionally urges us to adopt such behavior as will make social life agreeable. It not only demands honesty *when* it is the best policy. It commands that honesty *always* is the best policy. Honest behavior may mean your own temporary loss, but it also means humanity's permanent gain. The aim of morality is to do your duty by making others happy. For in this way you will make yourself worthy of happiness.

And—the categorical imperative tells us—there is only one kind of happiness that is worth while: the consciousness of duty well done. And the highest duty of all men is to make the world a moral place to live in—an organized society which will demand from each his unstinted labor and render to each his commensurate reward. In such a society the individual is to be regarded not as a means toward another individual's greed, but as an "end in himself"—a master in his own right, an equal sharer in the duty of making his country's laws and in the benefit of living under its protection. The ethics of Kant may be summarized in one supreme commandment:

*Thou shalt not exploit thy neighbor.* "There can be nothing more dreadful than that the actions of a man should be subject to the will of another man."

*There's Nothing Good in Life—Schopenhauer*

Schopenhauer believed that it is not only wrong to subject another man to your will, but that it is evil to will. The will to live is the greatest of misfortunes. For life is nothing but a succession of cares. "If a great and pressing care is lifted from our breast, another immediately replaces it." The basic note of existence is pain. Pleasure is merely a temporary breathing spell between one pain and another. And knowledge is nothing but an increased capacity for suffering. "As knowledge becomes more complete, suffering becomes more apparent . . . The man who is gifted with genius suffers most of all."

For he knows that every comedy, if carried to a logical conclusion, would develop into a tragedy. Every true picture of life is the picture of a nightmare. "Whence did Dante take the materials of his hell but from our actual world?"

Life, in short, is not worth the living. It is "a business which does not cover expenses." We are unhappy in failure, and unhappy in success; unhappy in isolation and unhappy in friendship—Schopenhauer's philosophy was certainly not conducive to the making of friends. Our human society is like a family of hedgehogs. We must keep closely enough together for warmth, yet far enough apart so that the quills of our neighbors will not prick us.

Life, then, is an evil; and optimism, "a bitter mockery of our woes." The greatest good in life—the *only* good—is to terminate our will to live. First of all, we must deny our will to dominate over others. For domination will only increase the sufferings of others but will not lessen our own sufferings. Next we must stifle the will to dominate over ourselves. We must mortify ourselves and turn away from all ambitions and pleasures and desires—even the desire to propagate our species.

Does this mean that we are to commit suicide? No, declares Schopenhauer. "Suicide, the wilful destruction of the individual, is a vain and foolish act . . . For the species, and life, and the will in

general, remain unaffected by it, even as the rainbow endures however fast the drops which support it for the moment may chance to fall." Do not kill yourself, but kill in all men the desire to perpetuate the evil of life. Like Tolstoy, Schopenhauer advocated not *individual* but *race* suicide—through a sour and solemn adoption of universal celibacy. "The only thing that makes life tolerable is the thought of death."

### *The Good is the Useful—Utilitarian Ethics*

Schopenhauer's philosophy was a sickly aftermath to the horrors of the Napoleonic wars. The whole world had gone insane—"and the only cure for insanity is a merciful oblivion."

But the madness was only temporary. The world recovered its senses—for a while at least—and turned once more from the savagery of killing to the business of living. What all men seek in life, said the utilitarians, is not the negative surcease from pain but the positive increase of pleasure. And the sum-total of pleasure is happiness.

When society is ill-organized, each man seeks "the greatest amount of happiness *all by himself*." When it is well-organized, each man seeks "the greatest amount of happiness *altogether*."

As civilization advances, in other words, man realizes that happiness, like a feast, is best enjoyed when most generously shared. Little by little, private pleasure is made to coördinate with public prosperity. When we contemplate a certain act we must consider two things: the consequence of that act upon ourselves, and its consequence upon all others whose interests are likely to be concerned. We must never pursue our pleasures to a point where they will interfere with other people's rights. A man's desires, therefore, can never be divorced from his duties. And the ultimate purpose of morality is to promote the *common stock of social happiness* as opposed to the *preferred stock of personal greed*.

But in order that society may be happy, it is necessary that every individual shall be content. In other words, we must have a delicately balanced intermixture of egoism and altruism. This balance has been variously interpreted. For example, Jeremy Bentham declared that in the banquet of life "nothing but self-regarding affec-



tion (that is, egoism) will serve as a diet, though benevolence is a very valuable addition for dessert." John Stuart Mill, on the other hand, placed the balance upon a more definite basis. In matters that are *socially useful*, he said, we should maintain "a disinterested public spirit." Even in the matter of personal hygiene we should consider the public rather than our private interest. For "by squandering our health we would disable ourselves from rendering services to our fellow-creatures." On the other hand, our time is short and the world is cold. It is only right that we should seek to warm ourselves as much as possible. "Life is not so rich in enjoyment" that we can "afford to forego the cultivation of all (our) egoistic propensities." Mill would thus turn our altruism into a regular diet and our egoism into a spicy dessert. But Bentham and Mill would both agree that we must avoid all such personal indulgences as would result in "a definite damage, or definite risk of damage, either to an individual or to the public." The *best* life, therefore, is the *happiest* life because it is spent in activities that are *most useful* and *least harmful* to society.

### *The "Absolute" Ethics of Herbert Spencer*

In an ideal society, declared Spencer, there would never be any talk about a mixture of egoism and altruism in the make-up of a man's character. In such a society there would be no question as to the relative rights of your pleasures and my happiness. There would be absolute standards of conduct that would apply to all persons, under all conditions, at all times.

And the highest conduct would aim, not at happiness—which is merely an "accompaniment" of life—but at the preservation and the amplification of life itself, in all its "length, breadth, and completeness."

This ideal toward which we are striving is—Spencer would agree with Kant—an innate moral sense. In its prolonged struggle for existence, the human race has acquired certain characteristics—instinctive reactions to its environment that have enabled it to survive. Such reactions have gradually come to be regarded as good behavior. A good act is one that conduces to life; a bad act, one that leads to death.

In the earlier period of human history—and unfortunately we have not as yet emerged from that period—men found it expedient to kill in order to live. Cruelty was regarded as courage, vindictiveness as virtue, and fighting as the noblest of human pursuits. But gradually it dawned upon the human mind that it was easier to survive through mutual aid rather than through mutual antagonism. And the idea of justice was born in the world. "The sentiment of justice can grow only as fast as the antagonisms of societies decrease, and the coöperations of their members increase." The formulas of war gave way—in a few advanced minds—to the maxims of peace. Slavery was softened into service, obedience into loyalty, licentiousness into license, frowardness into freedom. And the idea of human freedom became molded into a new concept. "Every man is free to do that which he wills, provided he infringes not the equal freedom of any other man." (Here Spencer combines the intuitionism of Kant with the utilitarianism of Bentham and Mill.)

All men are equally free to exploit the material resources of the earth. From each according to his ability, to each according to his desert. Not, however, to each according to his need, as advocated by the principles of modern communism. Spencer is very emphatic on this point. The communistic ideal, he maintains, can work only with regard to children, but not with regard to grownups. "Within the family group, most must be given where least is deserved, if desert is measured by worth." That is to say, by ability to produce. But within the social group of mature people, "benefit must vary directly as worth—worth being measured by fitness (to survive). The ill-fitted must suffer the evils of unfitness, and the well-fitted profit by their fitness." This, Spencer would admit, is an ethic based upon justice rather than mercy. But it is the only ethic possible, he would say, in a society condemned to an endless struggle for existence. "If, among the young, benefit were proportioned to efficiency, the species would disappear forthwith; and if, among adults, benefit were proportioned to inefficiency, the species would disappear by decay in a few generations."

And so Spencer proposes a new code of ethics—mercy toward the young, justice toward the mature. And this moral code should apply not only to the individual tribe, but to the entire family of mankind. In this human family every child has a right to kindly

protection, and every adult to honest competition. Help the helpless; as for the rest, allow them the freedom to help themselves without encroaching upon the freedom of their fellow men.

### *Beyond Good and Evil—Nietzsche*

It is nonsensical, declared Nietzsche, to talk about mercy and justice, good and evil, Christian virtue and pagan vice. Evolution has taught us that we need a transvaluation of our moral values. Life is a ruthless struggle for survival; and the most worthy to survive are those who have abandoned the "feminine ideals" of the saint and adopted the "masculine standards" of the superman. The superman will exercise his duties only toward his equals in strength. Toward everybody else he will maintain a spirit of ruthless contempt. "Almost everything that we call *higher culture* is based upon the spiritualization and the intensification of *cruelty*." Violence, cunning, avarice, deception, adventure, voluptuousness, hatred, revenge—all these are but "the signs of the superman's nobility." And this, declares Nietzsche, is the only type of nobility that Nature intends us to develop in our eternal struggle of "tooth and claw." To be victorious in this struggle, we must "do away" with the teaching of the *New Testament*—"the gospel of a completely ignoble species of man."

This is the philosophy of the "rugged individual" against the "ragged canaille"—of the heroes (*Herren*) against the herds (*Heerden*). "The whole of the morality of Europe is based upon the values which are useful to the herd." But, maintains Nietzsche, these values are false. Nature has no use for the herd. The so-called "virtues" of the masses—such as kindness, honesty, compassion, forgiveness, humility, love—are the weaknesses of a dying society—"a society unable to excrete." But the morality of the superman is the strength of a social system based upon the ruthless elimination of the unfit and the perpetual domination of the fit.

Let us therefore, said Nietzsche, "become *better* by being *less good*." For "the goal is not the happiness of the mass but the power of the class." Power through joy—a doctrine adopted by the Nazis—the joy of despising, overmastering and dispossessing your "inferiors," even of killing them to make room for the expansion of your

own "superior" class. Together with the mad King Lear, the half-mad Nietzsche would say:

I will do such things—  
What they are yet I know not—but they shall be  
The terror of the earth.

Unfortunately, it took just such a reign of terror to disprove the theory of Nietzsche. The self-appointed "supermen" of his unethical ethics succeeded merely in showing that ruthlessness is not a help but a hindrance to self-preservation. Twice within half a century the Germans attempted to bstride the world, and twice they were compelled to bite the dust. Nature is a costly but infallible teacher.

### *Kropotkin's Idea of Mutual Service*

The trouble with Nietzsche, and to a lesser degree with Spencer, said Kropotkin, is that they have failed to read aright the lesson of nature—the nature of evolution. They have misinterpreted the law of mutual struggle, and they have ignored the more significant law of mutual aid. Darwin himself, Kropotkin points out, has defined the instinct for mutual aid as the "permanent instinct" of humanity. *Interdependence is the predominant factor in Nature.* The world is not merely a battlefield in which the weak are exterminated by the strong, the sluggish by the swift, the simple by the cunning, and the timid by the bold. It is also a school for progress, a classroom for socialization, a platform for inculcating the lessons of longevity, intelligence, companionship, beneficence, sympathy and love. The process of evolution teaches us not only how to *live*, but how to *live together*. "Nature is by no means an illustration of the triumph of *physical force*." It is rather a demonstration of the ascendancy of *spiritual endowment*. Life is not a *contention* but a *coöperation*—a co-partnership of individuals for mutual protection. The struggle for existence is not between man and man, but between societies of men on the one hand and the destructive powers of Nature or of ill-willed individuals on the other. And in this struggle it is not the *predatory* but the *peaceful* creatures that survive. For peace leads to organization, and organization to strength. And therefore the mu-

tual-aid instinct "is always at work" in man. "This, as Darwin realized, is the origin and the basis of our human conscience."

But this is not all. "In the same instinct for mutual aid we have the origin of benevolence, and of that correlation of the individual with the group which is the starting point of all the higher ethical feelings"—such as justice, mutual sympathy and self-sacrifice. "Self-sacrifice is one of the most precious and most powerful forces in history. To help humanity—this great indolent body—advance one step, there has always been needed a shock which has crushed individuals." Yet this self-crushing—this intrepidity which is unafraid of death in order to preserve life—"is not a mere negation of self; it is the self raised to sublimity."

And why? Because evolution is a struggle not of the individual against all other individuals, but of the higher self against the lower self within each individual—the progressive effort of the *individual self* to become identified with the *social self*. This identification is the "ethical factor" that underlies all history. "It is already possible to conceive the history of mankind as the evolution of the inherent tendency of man to organize his life on the basis of mutual service—from the clan to the tribe, from the tribe to the state, from the state to the world-wide union of nations." For man is gradually learning to understand not only the identical direction of all human aims, but the essential identity of all human life.

### *The Ethics of Walt Whitman*

It is so much harder to *do* than to know *what to do*. In his *Memoirs of Frederick the Great*, Thiebault tells an interesting anecdote: "There was a certain Chamberlain von Mueller attached to the court of Frederick William I. In consequence of his passion for gambling he had lost his entire fortune; and at the same time, through the accompanying emotional excitement, he had undermined his health. One day an acquaintance said to him: 'Tell me frankly, if an angel should come down from Heaven and say to you, If you will gamble no more I will restore to you your property, and the lost strength and beauty of your youth, what would you do?' After a moment's reflection the unfortunate man replied: 'I would gamble.'"

There are many who preach the moral life, few who practice it. Indeed, it is accepted almost as axiomatic that the perfectly moral man "can not," in the words of Professor F. C. Sharp, "be anything but profoundly unhappy in a world so full of failure, suffering, and evil." Yet there was in the United States a man who, like Saint Francis, was profoundly happy because he was completely good; Walt Whitman was one of the rare creatures endowed with the sense to live, as well as to long for, the life of social comradeship.

Whitman did not shut his eyes to the evil of the world. Instead, he set himself physically and spiritually to the task of abolishing it wherever possible. And, where he could not abolish evil, he met it—and taught others to meet it—as a difficult but *necessary* and *temporary* passage toward the good. He found life so tolerable because he gave himself up so completely to others. Like Kropotkin, he understood that what we call self-sacrifice is in reality self-realization. He undermined his health, and almost lost his life, as a result of his ministrations to the wounded during the Civil War. Yet he said with the utmost sincerity: "Do not pity me; I am happiest when I can lessen another's pain."

Whitman recognized the identity of human aspirations and the equality of human worth. "The insignificant is to me as big as any." Nietzsche had sung the praises of the strong. Whitman raised his voice—and his hand—in defence of the weak. And the progressive tendency of ethics has been to demand a place for the weak, as well as for the strong, at the ample table of Mother Earth. It was his business, he said, to find the divine in the human, and to proclaim the miracle of all common things. "I will not have a single person slighted or turned away." He deliberately called his poems *Leaves of Grass*, because a leaf of grass is the most downtrodden of plants—the humble proletarian of the vegetable kingdom. And also, because it is the symbol of Nature's impartial beneficence toward all living things.

The ultimate note in ethics, as all the great poets and most of the great philosophers have realized, is not *justice* but *mercy*. The quality of mercy recognizes the equality of man. To the thoughtless sophisticate, especially in the non-democratic countries, there seems to be something foolish and vulgar in this apotheosis of democracy. But to Walt Whitman it is a fact beyond the province of dispute

that the peddler and the professor, the coal-miner and the king, Judy O'Grady and the Colonel's Lady, are all equal.

This doctrine does not mean, however, that the king is brought down to the level of the coal-miner. It means rather that both the coal-miner and the king are brought up to the level of God. For they are both, maintains Whitman, equally divine sparks thrown off from the forge of immortal life. No man is despicable. All of us are put into this life to do an important job. The Foreman in Heaven does not look with disdain upon any of his fellow-workers on earth. For He, too, is a Workingman—"the loving Laborer through space and time."

Whitman was eager "to teach the average man the glory of his daily walk and trade." And to teach *all* men to join in a singing brotherhood of devoted co-workers. To work together toward that "far-off, divine event"—the political and the social democratization of the world.

Walt Whitman was a prophet who "helped to bring his own prophecies to pass." He not only foretold the day of compassion toward all men, he showed the wisdom of compassion in his own day. He lived with and for the poor. He spent one entire winter driving a cab for a coachman who was ill. His life was a serene irradiation of friendship. He was perhaps the richest man of his time. Richest, that is, in the only thing that counts—the wholehearted affection of a grateful world.

"*This* is the meaning of life"—this fellow-feeling of contentment in the comradeship of equal men. "A New era will begin when humanity becomes aware of this fact . . . A new religion, greater and more inclusive than the old, will flush the world with love." For every unit of life will then recognize its identity with the whole. We are the leaves of one tree, the music of one instrument, the sharers of one destiny. "I know that the spirit of God is the brother of my own, and that all the men ever born are my brothers."

Whitman's ethical ideas are based upon an original interpretation of the Darwinian theory of evolution. The process of evolution, believed Whitman, applies not only to the species but to the individual as well. The progressive history of the species is unfolded within *this* world. The progressive life of the individual keeps on developing in *this* world and in the *next*. Our present existence is

but a passing phase of our complete and essential education. *It is our human privilege equally to enjoy the fruits of this education.* Walt Whitman would be ready to admit de Tocqueville's assertion that in this world we shall "never succeed in reducing all the conditions of society to a perfect level." But this, he would contend, is merely tantamount to saying that in a public school we shall never succeed in reducing all the children to the primary grade. *At this moment* we are in different grades, at different material and spiritual and social levels. But *in the final summation* we shall all reach the selfsame rank—complete identification with one another and with God. "Have you outstript the rest? Are you the President? It is a trifle; they will more than arrive there, every one." It is the mystical but none the less certain conviction of Whitman that all of us will attain to perfection in the end. Just what the nature of this "perfection" may be, he does not pretend to know. "But I know that it . . . will prove sufficient, and cannot fail."

It cannot fail the young man who died and was buried,  
 Nor the young woman who died and was put by his side,  
 Nor the little child that peeped in at the door, and then drew back  
     and was never seen again,  
 Nor the old man who has lived without purpose, and feels it with  
     bitterness worse than gall,  
 Nor him in the poor house . . .  
 Nor the numberless slaughtered and wrecked . . .  
 Nor anything in the earth . . .  
 Nor anything in the myriads of spheres,  
 Nor the myriads of myriads that inhabit them . . .

The glory of an immortal life awaits them all. "I do not call one greater and one smaller." Each in his appropriate grade at the proper time, but all advancing steadily and inevitably toward the final equality at the top. The Great Camerado will be there to welcome every last one of us with His smile of infinite love.

The purpose of ethics, then, is: first, for every man to recognize the basic equality of all other men; and second, for every man to act at all times in accordance with this basic recognition. Human beings are at their best behavior in the company of their peers.

Thus Walt Whitman, though he never wrote a formal treatise on morality, struck one of the deepest notes in the history of ethics.



For he fitted human conduct into a pattern which is at once simple and satisfactory and complete. It is one of the few ethical systems which resolve all human doubts and all human fears into a universal assurance of hope.

### *Social Ethics in the Twentieth Century*

It seems ironical to talk about ethics in an age which has seen the two most devastating wars in history. It is a sad commentary on human nature that the ethical consciousness of society trails far behind the ethical consciousness of the individual. The gang spirit, whether on the street corner in the slum or in the chamber of the legislative assembly, is still addicted to vices which the individual members of the government or the gang have long ago discarded. Mass robbery of the weaker groups by the stronger is still regarded as imperial expansion or manifest destiny. Mass hypocrisy between nations is praised as clever diplomacy; mass suspicion, as precautionary wisdom; mass murder, as glorious war. The law of anarchy still prevails between nation and nation, and between class and class. Discourtesy is still the predominant note among different racial or political or religious groups. And inhospitality is still the answer of the prosperous nations to the alien dispossessed who knock at their doors.

Yet in spite of this social immorality, there is ground for hope. In the commotion of our public barterings it is difficult to catch "the still small voice" of duty. Yet the voice is beginning to be heard. The moral sense of society is waking up. Our ethical teachers are gradually acquiring a language for social as well as for individual behavior. Thanks to men like William James and Bertrand Russell and John Dewey, we are slowly extending the Ten Commandments from the individual *thou* to the plural *you*. We must transform our moral concepts, observes Dewey, to include "everything which affects the value of human living." And these values, he adds, "are involved on the widest scale in social issues."

But the change from personal to social morality, he points out, "does *not* signify that morality becomes impersonal and collective; it remains and must remain personal in that social problems must be faced by individuals." The world, however, is becoming smaller;

and by the same token the conception of human neighborliness is becoming larger. It is the business of the individual nowadays to fit himself into this larger conception, to establish a peaceful partnership not only between himself and his own community, but between his own community and the rest of the world. The Second World War has shown that the remotest islanders in the Pacific are within a day's journey of our own back yard. And their hopes, within a fraternal embracement of our own hopes. *Their* hunger is *our* hunger; *their* welfare, *our* welfare. We must work together for our individual goods and our common good. "For many individuals," explains Dewey, "it is not now a question of whether they individually will appropriate property belonging to another, but whether existing large-scale economic arrangements"—such as national monopolies or international cartels—"operate to effect an equitable distribution of property; and if not, what they as individuals shall do about it."

In our present-day society, therefore, a man's duty prescribes not only his personal *action* but his social *legislation*. It is our duty "to reëxamine and if necessary to revise current convictions, even if that course entails the effort to change . . . existing institutions, and to direct existing tendencies to new ends." It is only through such group legislation that we can transform individual virtue into social wisdom. "Strange," observes Andreiev in his drama, *The Life of Man*, "that with so many good people in the world, a man can die of starvation. Why is it?" The answer is that we have not as yet learned to enact our benevolent intentions into beneficent laws. We have not as yet acquired the knack of socializing our morality. We have not yet learned—perhaps the human race is still too young to learn—the principle so aptly enunciated in the words of William James: "There can be no difference *anywhere* that doesn't make a difference *everywhere*."

Yet we are moving in the direction of that universal knowledge. "Whether we can discern it or not," writes Professor Hocking, "there is meaning and value in what now is, and in its motion, and in that towards which it moves."

And the goal of all human conduct, all human motion, all human *emotion*, finds as adequate an expression in the philosophy of Plato as it does in the most modern of our social systems of morality.

"The Highest Good," said Plato, "is the harmonization of the Whole Man with the Whole Universe." When every man has learned *this* truth, then Heaven will have become established on earth.

### Summary

And now, having caught our poetical glimpse of Heaven, we are ready under its light to examine the prosaic conduct of our everyday existence. The purpose of our daily life—and on this basis nearly all the ethical systems are agreed in spite of their superficial disagreements—is to develop ourselves as completely as possible, and to pursue this development as intelligently as is compatible with our instinct for *association* rather than for *dissociation*. For we are gregarious animals; we like to live not in caves but in communities. And, as civilization advances and the facilities for communication bring us more closely together, we find ourselves the members of larger and larger communities. Our desire for personal advancement is thus being constantly modified by our changing relationship toward more and more members of the human race. All ethics, then, may be reduced to a progressive formula for friendship.

How are we to apply this formula for friendship to our everyday activities?

### MORALITY AND BUSINESS

"The only test for the rightness of an act," observes Professor James Tufts, "is that persons of good character approve it." This definition needs to be modified somewhat as follows: "The only test for the rightness of an act is that *friendly* persons of good character *and superior intelligence* approve it." Every act must be judged by the triple standard of justice, affection, and common sense. This triple standard may be reduced to a single word—*compassion* (from the Latin *com*, which means *with*, and *passus*, which means *having suffered*). *Compassion* is *fellow-feeling*, *mercy*, the *human* translated into the *humane*.

Applied to the business world, this means that the economic structure of society should be based not only upon *equal opportu-*

nity for all competitors, but also upon *equal sympathy* for those who are not strong enough or clever enough to keep up the competitive pace. The tendency of the economic system of the world is from *competition* to *coöperation*. "Of what good is profit to me if it means loss to my fellow men?" In a business world based upon ethical principles, a man would be free to serve but forbidden to exploit his fellow men. Are you a merchant, a miner, a doctor, a barber, a sailor, a teacher, a shopkeeper, a salesman, a judge? You are doing your work in a social medium. You are not only trying to make a living for yourself, you are helping to make a living for society. Even if you labor at that "unfriendly workbench of the world's loneliest profession"—I mean the writing of books—you are not working in a vacuum of isolation. You are providing—let us hope—pleasure for the reader, and employment for stenographers, editors, proofreaders, printers, mechanics, booksellers, librarians, reviewers, postmen, and last but not least, eye-doctors and the grinders of glass. In your business activities, as in all your other activities, you are aiming at *self-expression* through *social coöperation*.

All business is interdependent. There is no such thing as an independent business man. Or an independent business organization, however large. Even the most gigantic of industries must rely upon a structure of equipment and banking and credit. *And consumers*. As the social unit of life becomes more and more extended, and as the individuals become more and more aware of their identical purpose to amplify the values of life, financial success comes more and more to be recognized not as dependent upon selfishness, but as interdependent upon service. *The customer is always right*. And in the daily traffic of life, whether we sell our jobs or our labor or our goods or good will, we are all of us customers of one another. Is there a strike going on? The question to be answered is—are all the customers being treated right? Are the employers, who are buying their labor, getting their money's worth? Are the workers, who are buying their chance to live, getting their labor's worth? Are the consumers, who are buying the combined production of capital and labor, getting their budget's worth? Is anybody trying to profit at anybody else's expense?

In other words, is anybody trying to cheat? For cheating consists

not only in short weight but in short wages—in the unequal balance between value received and service rendered. The ethical business attitude is for every man to remember that he is both a producer and a consumer, a seller and a buyer, an active competitor and a passive victim of competition. Cutthroat competition has been euphemistically called “a war in well-doing.” On the contrary, it is a war in doing one another to death. Unregulated industrial rivalry—as demonstrated again and again—leads to international conflict, social confusion, individual distress. Our business, whatever its nature, is not only a private concern but a public trust. Its success depends upon mutual interests and mutual loyalties. It is a collaboration in social prosperity through individual responsibility. The most ethical kind of business—and a few men have been wise enough to try it out—is the industrial co-partnership, the system in which the directors and the managers and the workers alike share in their enthusiasms, their profits and their risks.

This spirit of co-partnership, operating between groups and nations as well as between individuals, will lead not only to greater efficiency and richer profits, but to a greater and richer life. Under such a system, man will no longer be the servant of capital, but capital will become the servant of man.

#### MORALITY AND LOYALTY

Loyalty means obedience. But obedience to what? The loyal soldier obeys his officer. The loyal officer obeys his commander-in-chief. But whom does the loyal commander-in-chief obey? Moreover, the loyal citizen is expected to obey the laws of his country. But what of the loyal patriot who believes that the laws of his country may overlook or even encourage injustice to its weaker citizens? What is to be said of obedience to a dictatorship? Is loyalty, then, subservience to a king? To an institution? Or to a pattern of moral conduct?

At the present stage of our development, loyalty is obedience to morality. The loyal slave was obsequious to his *orders*; the loyal free man is faithful only to his *sense of order*. He coördinates his desires with the desires of his fellow men—personalities as precious to *themselves* as his own personality is to *himself*. He loves his

country because he loves his fellow men. The society toward which he aspires is a society of happy, courageous, giving and forgiving friends.

Loyalty, then, is faithfulness to our friendships—the identification of ourselves with our fellows. “When I encounter my friends,” writes Emerson, “it is not I but the Deity in me and in them” which “derides and cancels the thick walls of individual character . . . and now makes many one.”

This cultivation of friendship, this daily exercise of our loyalties, is especially possible in a complex and varied society like that of the United States. We are a blending of many countries, many races, many social and religious and political backgrounds. It seems as if Heaven had kept this continent hidden away until 1492 in order that it might be prepared as the test-tube of the new ethics. Trained for centuries to settle their quarrels through the antiquated method of fighting, the Europeans come to this country and learn to fuse their differences into a spirit of friendly coöperation. As Walter Lippmann puts it, “we agree to differ.” But we differ only in order that we may the more intelligently learn to agree.

For we are building in this country the first *international nation* of the world. This is the ideal to which we are asked to devote our loyalties. In our personal adjustments to our complex American society, we are beginning to demonstrate the truth that all the warring races can be welded into a single unwarlike family. Here in this country, it seems, we are destined to find the solution to the philosopher’s eternal quest for a united mankind. The love of freedom that is England, the beauty that is France, the mysticism that is Russia, the music that is Italy, the poetry that is Ireland, the passion that is Africa, the courage that is Norway and Sweden, the peacefulness that is Holland, and the hunger for the divine that is the Orient—all these ingredients have been poured into the crucible of America and are being transmuted into the gold of a new civilization.

It is to the establishment of this civilization that we owe our deepest and our widest loyalties. For each of us, through his due regard *for*, yet friendly criticism *of*, the interests and the opinions of his fellow Americans, can help to make this country of ours the hope of the world.

## MORALITY AND MARRIAGE

We are now living in a transitional period of human mating. The old standards of courtship and marriage have broken down; the new standards have not as yet taken shape.

The institution of marriage seems to be as old as the history of mankind. It is not merely a *personal* but a *social* tradition. It is meant not to legalize desire but to preserve life. It is a permanent union of mates to care for the offspring they produce.

The evolution of marriage has followed the development of our social needs. In primitive society, "when strife was the general rule of life," polygamy was the solution to the problem of raising an adequate human crop for the harvesting of the next war. The husband was the fighter, and his wives were the breeding machines for the continuation of the fight. In those early unions there was little tenderness or love. The man hunted his women, as he hunted his food, with a club. And when he captured them, they remained his exclusive property until they died—or were wrested away from him by a stronger man.

Later, as men became more refined, they *purchased* their wives instead of *capturing* them. The higher the price, the more respectable the wife. And the more honorable the marriage. The children of a free marriage—that is, a marriage for which the husband had to pay nothing—"were looked upon as bastards and treated with contempt."

As a result of this practice, polygamy became a luxury of the rich. The poor were obliged to restrict themselves to the purchase of one wife. Man, moreover, had developed from a hunting to a planting animal. The sedentary life of agriculture had replaced the migratory life of fighting. Monogamy came to be recognized as the most sensible way of raising a family and cultivating a field.

But the man was the master of his wife. He had bought her as he had bought his domestic animals and his tools. From Labrador to Borneo, death was the penalty for a woman's unfaithfulness to her husband. Among the Indians of California, a man put his wife to death even if he caught her walking in the forest with another man. In ancient Greece, the men looked upon their wives as their slaves,

and upon their courtesans as their playmates and friends. In Rome, there was a popular adage to the effect that "there can be no mercy to servants, dogs, and wives." In medieval Europe, a man who went on a journey insured his wife's faithfulness by putting a "chastity lock" upon her. But he put no restraint upon his *own* faithfulness.

Her lord, if he be wearied of the face  
 Within the house, fares forth; some merrier place  
 Will ease his heart; but she waits on, her whole  
 Vision enchain'd upon a single soul.

Marriage was still looked upon as a means for propagation, and not as a partnership for happiness. No woman was regarded, under any circumstances, as the equal partner of man. "During her infancy"—I am quoting a medieval law—"a woman depends upon her father; during her youth, upon her husband; when her husband is dead, upon her sons; if she has no son, upon the nearest male relative of her husband. For a woman must never govern herself according to her own will." She must submit to her station as a bearer of children, said the medieval moralists, because it is the will of God. Her devotion to her family is a necessary burden; her surrender to her husband's embraces, an unavoidable shame. "It is too bad the Lord hasn't given us a more decent way to produce offspring."

It was not until the Reformation that woman began to be regarded as "God's gift to man." Marriage, said Martin Luther, provides for the birth and the nurture of children who are to grow up in the likeness of God. If they are to be lovable children, they must be raised in an atmosphere of love. "The natural affection of parents makes the task of education a pleasure; and in parental tenderness, which is similar to the tenderness of God, children find an image of the Sacred Heart."

And thus we see the dawn of equality—of equal attachment and equal faith—shedding a new light upon "the marriage of bodies for the creation of souls."

This spirit of faithful and sympathetic attachment between husband and wife became petrified, under Puritanism, into a rigorous "cultivation of holiness." Use the body to plant the holy seed. Marriage is a sacrament, and celibacy a sin. In Boston, an "antient



maid" was considered "such a curse as nothing can exceed it." And even an unmarried man was looked upon as a "thing abominable in the sight of God."

But marriage, regarded as a holy duty, must never be turned into an unholy pleasure. The seed of the male and the soil of the female must be kept pure through ascetic renunciation. They expurgated their books, they draped their figures and even their furniture from the public gaze, and they concealed their thoughts—especially "in the presence of children." They believed, as Mr. Walter Lippmann puts it, "that if only they had covered up their passions they had conquered them." Their idea was not altogether wrong. As many of the great philosophers have pointed out, we can arrive at happiness only through the judicious curbing of our pleasures. But the Puritans carried this idea far too far. It is a long cry from Confucius to Comstock. The latter's hypercritical prudery only helped to arouse the resentful adventurousness of his contemporaries.

Today our marriage institution is in a chaotic state. To this chaos there are several contributory factors. First of all, we live in a generation of experimental excitement. It is not only the indirect reaction against Puritanism but the direct prompting from within that has set us off upon a voyage of re-discovery in the mysterious field of "human embracements." Then again, the emergence of woman from the home into the business world has given her a sense not only of material but of moral independence. She demands from society an equal right both to her earning and her yearning. Furthermore, the higher standard of living—the luxuries of yesterday are the necessities of today—has delayed marriage until such a period in life when the married couples can hope to live up to such a standard. "If you marry when you're old, your marriage will be cold." Moreover, the desire for greater comfort has focused the attention of our youngsters upon marriage for convenience rather than for affection. Our cynical teachers and novelists and poets are telling the young men to marry their boss's daughter, and the young women to marry their boss. Finally, the extended and successful use of contraceptives has encouraged our generation to delay before marriage and to stray afterwards.

As a result of the above and of other similar factors, we have too much love without marriage and too many marriages without love.

In the scramble to keep up with the Joneses—and to covet their mates—the women prey upon the men and the men prey upon the world. And everybody deceives everybody else. Our generation has become *erotic* and *neurotic*. It would seem that we have completely forgotten the primary function of marriage—to give and to receive love in order that we may render our own lives wholesome and contribute our heritage of wholesome men and women for the next generation.

For marriage—let us repeat—is not only an *individual* but a *social* institution. Every marriage and every divorce is a matter of world-wide significance. In this life of ours there is no isolated event, no isolated individual, no isolated human bond. And of all human bonds the most fundamental is marriage, for it is the spring which feeds the perennial stream of existence. It is for society to devise decent ways for earlier and more permanent marriages, and decent divorces without cruelty or collusion where marriages have proved a failure. Various experiments toward this end have been suggested, and in some cases attempted—trial marriage, trial separation, free love (as if genuine love isn't always free), extra-marital diversions with absolute frankness among all the parties concerned, voluntary adjustment of the husband to the standard he expects of his wife, defiant abandonment of the wife to the standard she condones in her husband.

But whatever the experiment, it is for society to suggest, for the individual to test. Unfortunately there is no possible method for checking the results of our groping toward the new conception of marriage. For in no other human relationship is there so much bashful reticence or wilful deceit. What we need is an airing of the secret chambers of our spirit—perhaps the psychoanalysts are helping us to that end—a clearer and cleaner understanding of our human weakness and human strength.

Yet even in the present state of our imperfect knowledge and indecisive drift, we have an instinctive feeling for the right direction. And this instinct is toward *individual loyalty for social health*. It is here especially that we can apply our progressive formula for friendship. The way of human adjustment is hard and painful and steep. But we can make it tolerable, even exciting, if we remember that "the road of ascent," as Dean Inge has observed, "is by

personal affection." Why not make a single Golden Standard apply to marriage just as a single Golden Rule applies to life? And why not base this marriage standard upon the simple law of reciprocal good will? We remember that it takes two to make a quarrel; but we forget that it also takes two to make up. And quarrels are best made up—indeed, quarrels are best *avoided*—when each side is willing to see the other fellow's side as clearly as his own. That is, when each side is wise enough to demand less and to give more. It is in this way that two little egos become one complete self.

This larger self—as Charles F. Dole points out in his *Religion for the New World*—is the result of a sensible attitude toward justice. "Consider justice! It seems immediately to lie on the surface of our minds. Justice! men say; we desire it more than anything. Children think so; struggling workmen will starve for it; great nations will sacrifice their boys' lives by the millions to compel justice upon the world . . . But this is not what the great word says. In fact, it runs the opposite way. These people all want to *get* justice, to *force others* to be just . . . What the word really says, is to *do* justice; this plain emphasis is commonly overlooked . . . Let any man set his mind to do justice, and he never lies awake nights because others fail to do justice to him. The startling paradox is, that here is the way to success in every kind of enterprise . . . Does the wife (and the same holds true of the husband) desire praise, appreciation, and love? What domestic tragedies arise when a woman seeks to get or claim her dues! The attitude of the beggar for love shuts the heart. Let her do her best as wife and mother, and never mind how much or little she is loved. *Love will now surround her.*"

This is one of the profoundest truths in human psychology. Let the husband and the wife worry about *paying* their dues to each other, and they will not have to worry about *collecting* them. In this way they can establish a partnership of mutual affection and trust—a congenial environment for the primary objective of marriage, the *bringing* of children into a *good* world and their *upbringing* for the creation of a *better* world.

## MORALITY AND THE HOME

The main purpose of marriage, therefore, is the consolidation of the family into a unit of comradeship. Every heart leaps up at the picture of the family re-union. Christmas for the Gentile, Passover for the Jew, the graduation, the engagement, the wedding, the anniversary—every gathering around the family table is a holiday, a holy day. Obliterated are the distances and the differences that may have kept apart the various members of the family who are now assembled for the festival. At the one extreme are the grandparents, limping painfully toward the night. At the other extreme, the little ones, toddling expectantly *out* of the night. In the center, the middle-aged members of the family—the support of the old, the hope of the young. And all of them are suffused with the spirit of one purpose, one understanding, *one common joy*. William C. Gannett has called this spirit “the dear togetherness.”

For Paradise no need to roam—  
The foretaste of it all is home,  
Where young and old, through Eden's weather,  
Can laugh and praise and thank together.

In the ideal family, every member has learned to regard all the other members as *ends in themselves*. In their mutual service—a service freely offered, never asked—every individual arrives at his fullest growth. For no member of this ideal family ever intentionally hurts or exploits or slights any other member. If there has been a misunderstanding, a frank explanation will do much more to dissipate it than a frowning silence. It is always easy to find the right word when the heart is in the right place.

In the present state of society, however, this ideal family life is all-too-rare. The very expression, a *family re-union*, pre-supposes a *family dis-union*. The blessed spirit of “togetherness” is reserved for special holiday occasions. For we are now witnessing a transition not only in the institution of marriage but in the function of the home. Time was when the home served as the political, social, economic and religious center of human interest. The father was the head of the family, the arbiter of its behavior, the provider of its

livelihood, and the leader of its devotion. He was the unquestioned patriarch in the home, just as the king was the unquestioned monarch in the state. But now all this is changed. The idea of democracy has abolished the old prerogative of the king and established the new sovereignty of the people. The same democratic idea has destroyed the old prerogative of the father, *but has not as yet developed a new sovereignty for the family.*

The family today is a disintegrating unit. The center of political interest has moved from the home to the state. More and more the impersonal branches of the government are assuming the functions of the personalities that nurtured and cherished their family trees. The focus of social activity has moved from the home to the cocktail lounge and the night club. The axis of economic interest has moved—as a result of the Industrial Revolution—from the home to the office, from the farm to the factory, from the country to the city. The spirit of religious worship has left the home, where devotion was a daily concern of the family, and is now centered in the church, where the family congregates only once a week or not at all.

Not only is the family disintegrating, but many people under present conditions are reluctant even to *start* a family. Living in cells euphemistically called apartments—cramped quarters where “dogs and children” are not allowed—young couples leave their home in the morning to go to their respective jobs, return to dress hastily for dinner at some restaurant, spend the evening out where they can “see people” as harried and hurried as themselves, and come back finally to rest for another day of homeless and childless escape from monotony. As they grow older and their economic situation becomes more secure, the wife leaves her job—but not to make a home. It is too late in life now to start a substantial family. One child—perhaps two—but, as a general rule, no more. Big families need much space to thrive in, and space in the cities is too expensive.

And so they go on. The husband becomes prosperous; and the wife, parasitic. In the morning the children are sent to a day school, and in the afternoon to a play school or to the movie—anywhere so as not to be in the mother’s way. And the mother spends her time at the bridge club or in the department store, breathlessly

squandering the money which the husband is breathlessly accumulating. And at night the children are whisked off to bed, and the parents are whirled off to some entertainment where they may forget the unbearable boredom of their existence. No time for home life, no time to become acquainted with those strange creatures called their children. In their eagerness to run after play, the parents forget that they are running away from the best playmates in the world.

And then comes a lonely and listless old age. For, never having cultivated the *confidence* of their children, they have never won their *love*. And so they travel to the south, the east, the west—anywhere to escape from their home and from themselves. But wherever they go, they stagnate in their own unhappiness—like puddles that have become separated from the invigorating current of life. Their only pleasure now is to wait for the family re-union—that momentary ecstatic reminder of what their life *might have been*.

And what their children's life *may yet be*. For in all this confusion of modern existence it is possible to see the shaping of a new pattern. The tendency nowadays is once more to decentralize the city and to reestablish the home. Easier transportation and higher incomes have turned the entire country into a suburb. It is all very well to make fun of the suburbanites. They are the backbone of the nation. Give every man a cottage to build and a garden to cultivate, and you will have no fear of rebellion or discontent. There is little occasion for grumbling when a man has a home to *play in*, and a family to *play with*.

And the family, it seems, is about to emerge out of the present chaos into something greater than ever in the past. Child bearing is becoming less painful, and child education more intelligent. Not only the children but the parents as well are being stimulated to a richer understanding of themselves and of one another. Words like *brotherhood*, *fatherhood* and *motherhood* are beginning to assume a new significance. As a result of our suffering in two world wars within a generation, those of us who have been re-united with their families are acquiring a new sense of the tenderness of kinship. Something of the holiness of the Mother of God has come to shine upon the mothers of men. Mother's Day, which started as a com-

mercial "stunt," is developing into a genuine renewal of affection. Such is the ever rightward trend of our human progress that even sordid beginnings can be transformed into noble ends.

These, then, are some of the tendencies which—I think—are shaping up toward a new conception of the family. Better livelihoods and more ample facilities for living, less suffering and greater happiness in motherhood, and a warmer feeling for kinship—these are the ingredients that are being combined into the rejuvenated formula for friendship. The family of the future, it appears, will be smaller, but healthier, more understanding and therefore freer and friendlier, than the families of the past. And, in their joyful and thoughtful contacts with their integrated smaller families, the sons and the daughters of tomorrow will learn thoughtfully and joyfully to integrate themselves into the larger family of the world.

#### MORALITY AND LOVE

And love shall be the cement that will hold them together. In Plato's *Symposium* there is a discussion about the meaning of love. The comic poet, Aristophanes, relates an amusing account of love's origin. At first, says Aristophanes, the gods made man bi-sexual—that is, male and female in one. The two halves composed a happy and harmonious sphere. But man sinned against the gods, and they punished him by cutting him in two. From that day on, he is an unhappy creature of separated halves who are forever yearning to be re-united into one. But all too frequently, when a couple of halves get together, they are found to be misfits. They didn't belong to the same sphere in the first place. And thus discomfort arises, and friction, and discontent. And, in many cases, divorce. But when two halves are lucky enough to fit, they recognize instinctively and at once their former identity. And then they are suffused with the glow and the harmony and the sweetness of love.

All this, Aristophanes admits, is but a jester's theorizing on love. But jesters are often the most serious of philosophers. Love, as Aristophanes guessed, is our human sense of re-union with our fellow humans. When Aristophanes thought he was theorizing, he was subconsciously groping toward a scientific law. (Isn't every scientific "discovery" the emergence of a subconscious intuition

into a recognized fact?) All life is a process of separation and copulation. The cell is divided into two parts, the amoeba into two nuclei, the animal into two sexes. And then the opposite process begins; the two sexes—that is, the two halves of the *old* life—are united to produce *new* life. The creation and the continuation of life are thus made possible by the passion that drives two individuals to merge into one.

And this *passion for unity* is but another name for *love*. It not only *creates* life, it *is* life. It is the cohesion of separate elements into a spirit of vitality, a *will to live*. It transcends sex, the family, the tribe, the race, the nation. It is the bond that is meant to unite all men into one mankind. Saint Paul was eternally right when he said that “just as there are many parts united in our human bodies . . . so, many as we are, *we form one universal body* . . . and we are individually *parts of one another*.”

Love, observes Plato, is the human passion for harmony. This is but another way of expressing the idea of Saint Paul. For harmony is the melting of the many into the one. It is true that all the world loves a lover; but it is equally true that a lover loves all the world. He beholds beauty in everything, because his love imagines the missing parts that would complete unsightly fragments into graceful forms. He sees the world whole through a personality made wholesome by his love.

The springtime of love expands the heart to a sensitiveness not only for human contacts but for all things that have fragrance and music and poetry and color and light. A strange new experience, a brave new life, a dancing new world. A world of infinite promise and infinite growth. A world so huge you can hardly grasp it in your imagination, yet so small you can almost encircle it with your arms. For it is all *within* you, *an intimate part* of you—a friendly singing echo of the endless song of life. The invitation to new birth, the acceptance of those about to be born.

For love is all-inclusive, and all life is one. Love is the universal impulse—of flesh for flesh, of soul for soul, of life to perpetuate life, of the broken bits of human glass to melt into the kaleidoscope of human beauty. “All men,” writes De Musset, “are liars, traitors, babblers, hypocrites, fools; all women are perfidious, flirtatious, artificial, vain . . . But there is in the world one thing holy and



sublime—the union of these two imperfect individuals” to work together toward the perfection of the race. The love of man for woman, of mother for child, of sister for brother, of the martyr for mankind, are but different aspects of the selfsame phenomenon—the instinctive groping of the parts toward the fusion with the whole. Every instance of love is a link in the golden chain that binds humanity together. In this selfish world of ours, the only thing utterly unselfish is love. Listen again to that sublime poet of love—the Apostle Paul: “Love suffers long, and is kind; love envies not; love swaggers not, is not puffed up, is not provoked, seeks not its own advantage; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.”

And love is never wasted. It was Maeterlinck who made the profound observation that even an unrequited love is among heaven's greatest gifts. For the lover is much happier in the giving than in the receiving of love. One day the artist Van Gogh met a woman of the streets. He took her into his home out of pity. His pity soon turned into love; but his love was not returned. She drank herself into savage fits, reviled him, beat him, and had a child by another man. “The language she uses!” he wrote to his brother. “And the temper she displays!” But he found his greatest happiness in lavishing his love upon her. “One feels best what love is when sitting near a sickbed,” he wrote. In ministering to the wants of this derelict he found not only his greatest happiness but his greatest inspiration. “In order to paint sublimely, one must love.” Out of his deep tenderness for a fellow human—“I care for her because she is so alone”—came some of his most beautiful paintings. She finally left him to return to her house of prostitution. But to the end of his days he was grateful to her. “For she has given me the opportunity to fulfil my hunger for love.”

The great hunger of all existence this side of heaven. The embrace of the human body by the human soul. In the blending of two drops of water we find the secret of all flowing streams. In the blending of two fragments of living spirit we discover the continuity and unity of all life.

## VII

# The Mystery of Divine Worship — Religion

### *The Meaning of Religion*

**R**ELIGION—derived most likely from the Latin *re-ligare*—means *the binding together* of heart to heart. It is the harmonization of the individual mind within itself, and the attunement of the individual mind to the harmony of the world. It is the instinctive sense of relationship between the part and the whole.

Considered from this comprehensive point of view, religion is closely akin both to science and to philosophy. For science endeavors to analyze the threads, and philosophy tries to interweave them into an intelligible design. Religion is the reconciler of the two—the organizer of the parts, the harmonizer of the whole. It is this spirit of organized harmony that Walt Whitman had in mind when he wrote: “Each is not for its own sake; I say the whole earth and all the stars in the sky are for religion’s sake.”

Religion in this sense is not a matter of any one church or any one group or any one creed. It is as wide as humanity. Every human being, even the so-called agnostic or atheist, is religious at heart. For every human being has an intuitive sense that he *belongs*—that he is “an end to larger ends,” that the world he lives in is *his* world, that the life bestowed upon him is an integral part of *all* life, a necessary cadence in the “strains musical flowing through the ages.” Despite the quarrels between the men of little knowledge and the men of little faith, all knowledge is based upon the faith that we are learning for a purpose, and all faith is based upon the knowledge that this purpose is to adjust us to our tenantry of the universe.

This fact was instinctively recognized even among the savages. Their *Shamans*, or Medicine men, were in their crude way both scientists and priests. They were "men of magic" because, having observed the regular processes of nature, they could "work miracles" by foretelling events. And thus they were the experimenters in the laboratory of the universe and the interpreters of the harmony of life.

This double function of scientific knowledge and religious integration—this sense of "unity with the spirit of the world"—was somewhat more fully developed among the Hebrew prophets. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel—these and the lesser prophets—translated the natural laws of the universe into moral principles. They had observed the sequence of cause and effect in historic events, and they had learned from this observation that certain actions were very likely to result in certain re-actions—that injustice would bring disaster, cupidity would lead to starvation, and aggressiveness would end in death. Their religious fervor was but the interpretation of a scientific fact.

We shall see this idea operating at the heart of religion to this very day. Human life is a coalescence of physical principles and ethical truths—of material harmony and spiritual love. This coalescence, recognized by scientists such as Newton and Helmholtz, by the philosopher-poet Spinoza, and by the poet-scientist Goethe, finds its modern echo in one of the greatest investigators of the mystery of the world. "In every true searcher of Nature," writes Albert Einstein, "there is a kind of religious reverence."

For religion is the reverence which seeks to correlate divided facts into united meanings. The religious man feels instinctively that his world is not merely a machine-shop of whirring wheels and darting shuttles and deafening devices moving aimlessly toward the closing hour of the night. To him the world is a place of unfolding flowers, of promised beauty, of living motion and believing and hoping and loving hearts. "I am not contained between my hat and boots," writes Walt Whitman. And the world is not contained between the atoms and the stars. There is something *within* myself and the world, something *beyond* the limitation of space and the mutability of time. It is the binding spirit of religion—the *harmonious togetherness* of life.

This harmony is found in all the great religious systems of the world. Whatever their external disputes, they all are at one in their effort to reconcile "the individual soul with the World Soul." In the study of the supreme religious leaders of history, it is heartening to note how many are the points on which they agree, how few the points on which they differ—just as it is *disheartening* to note how *few* are the points on which their *followers* agree, and how *many* the points on which they differ.

We must therefore be careful to distinguish between religions, the various *forms* of worship, and religion, the single *spirit* of worship. This spirit calls out to one God under many names, and embraces one righteousness under many rites. "So many ways that wind and wind" to the simple creed of being kind. It is of the utmost significance that the founders of practically all the great religions, drawing their inspiration from a single source of light, have based their philosophy upon the identical foundation of faith and hope and love.

*Faith.* All the religious leaders, however separated by time and place, and however impossible it was for them to communicate and to compare their thoughts, have arrived at the selfsame conviction that there is a divine purpose in life. This conviction springs as naturally from a devout mind as an oak tree springs from an acorn. It is not the result of acquired information, but the spontaneous flowering of human thought. Otherwise, how would the same idea arise among the Chinese and the Persians and the Greeks, the South Sea Islanders, the American Indians, and the African blacks? The seed has an instinct to grow into a plant. And man has an instinct to blossom into faith. To a belief in the justice of God and in the goodness of life. With all his faults, every man "carries heaven in his heart." He is born with an impulse to make himself useful to his fellow men. For he knows intuitively that all men are created to play an important part in a definite design under the prompting of a purposeful and beneficent Guide.

*Hope.* In this purposeful and beneficent design of God—agree the prophets of practically all the religions—the human soul is embarked upon a divine journey. The earth is the vestibule to the heavens. Our present life is but a transition—a passage through the wilderness to the Promised Land. Often the paths in the wilderness

are tangled and obscure, and we bruise ourselves and our fellows as we try to struggle through to the light. But our hope lures us incessantly on. It is an infallible instinct. Without it, there would be no human endeavor. But with it, all human endeavor takes on a meaning and a shape. We agonize on, because we *know* that our footsteps are headed right. The loss of a beloved, the torture of an injustice, the tidings of an incurable disease, the devastations of war—all these we can cast off as we travel resolutely forward electrified by our hope. And this hope tells us, as the mystic-scientist Swedenborg has put it, that "man is born upon earth in order that he may become an angel in heaven." The more loudly the cynic sneers at this idea, the more suspicious we may become that he is captivated under its spell. "Methinks thou dost protest too much."

For even those who *deny* hope are hopeful that their denial is wrong. We *want* to believe that all suffering is but a learning for future happiness, and that this happiness is reserved for each and every one of us. This, if true, would be good news. And it is the good news—because, as the prophets insist, it is the *true* news—that the great religions bring to mankind. Throughout human history the prophets have subscribed to the hope that "good shall fall at last—far off—at last, *to all*."

*Love.* The motif that binds the harmony of faith into the unit of hope is love. "Where love is, there God is." Our very sufferings, declare the prophets, are the corrections of an erring child by a loving Father. Listen to the Hindu poet, Rabindranath Tagore, as he talks about punishing his beloved child:

Say of him what you please, but I know my child's failings.  
I do not love him because he is good, but because he is my little  
child . . .  
When I must punish him, he becomes all the more a part of my being.  
When I cause his tears to come, my heart weeps with him.  
I alone have a right to blame and punish, for only he may chastise  
who loves.

Love, as the Swiss philosopher Amiel observed, is a faith. "And one faith leads to all faiths." And to the collective hope for the happiness of all the children of God. There is a Laguna legend about Tauri, a young Indian who was at work far from his native

village. When asked for a song, he said: "I will sing you my own song that I sing to my children and to my wife."

"But how can you sing to them when they are at home in Laguna and you are here?"

"I sing to them, and they sing to me, even though we are far apart. And our songs travel over the pathway of love, and they bring happiness to us all."

One faith, one hope, one song of universal happiness to all hearts united in love. *This* is religion.

For all the great religions agree that love—call it sympathy or friendship, if you prefer—is the joyous call of comrade to comrade upon man's exciting journey toward the divine.

### *How Religion Began*

Various theories have been advanced as to the possible origin of religion. The Latin poet Lucretius wrote that "men created the gods because of their fear of nature." And the Hebrew poet would seem to agree with him. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." And of religion, declared Joseph McCabe, the "saint of the disbelievers." For the Lord, he said, is a myth created by the fear of men. In the dawn of their human existence, they saw their shadows in the water and their friends in their dreams, and they concluded that all people had two bodies—the body that you could touch, and the shadow-body that appeared only on special occasions but remained hidden away all the rest of the time. When anyone died, his first body was buried in the earth; but his second body, his *shadow-body*, kept coming to you sometimes when you were asleep, and sneaking up behind you sometimes to trip you when you were awake. The shadow-body, therefore, must be still alive, somewhere.

Now suppose the man who had died, and who was now plaguing people with his visitations, was the chief of a tribe. During his lifetime he was a man greatly to be feared. But now that he was dead, he was even more greatly to be feared. For his shadow-body was invisible, and nobody knew just when or how he was likely to attack those creatures who were unfortunate enough to displease him.

In order to gain his good will, therefore, it was necessary to bribe him with flatteries and gifts. For he was a spirit terrible and mighty. He thundered in the heavens, he flamed in the volcano, he inflicted disaster upon those he disliked, and he prompted the animals to prowl and to kill. This powerful shadow-spirit furthermore controlled a magical, mysterious something that floated in the air. The name of this thing was *Luck*. Sometimes it came to help you, and sometimes it didn't. You and your friend went out to battle one day. Your friend was killed, and you escaped. Luck was with you, and against your friend. But why? Perhaps because of something important that you did and your friend neglected to do. But how could you tell? Well, there were wise men in your tribe who made it their business to find out. These men had become experts in Luck, holy magic-men, priests. They told you what you must do and what you must not do in order to win favor in the eyes of your Shadow-Chief, your God, and to get your proper share of Luck. These priests, the interpreters of God, were to be strictly obeyed. The consequence of disobedience was death.

This, then, according to McCabe and his followers, is the way in which religion arose in the primitive world. Human faith is founded upon "the shadow of reality." Gods are merely dead men. The world of the dead is more powerful than the world of the living. Among certain savage tribes, it has been pointed out, it is customary for the living chief to send messages to his deified dead forefathers. And the method of delivering a message from this world to the next is rather interesting—to everybody concerned but the messenger. The chief delivers the letter verbally to his slave, or engraves it upon his shaved skull, and then he wishes his slave godspeed and cuts off his head.

Yet the slaves are told to rejoice. For their bodies of flesh are killed, but their shadow-bodies are launched into eternal life.

So ingrained was this primitive belief in the deification of the spirit after death that among some of the savage tribes it was considered dangerous for a man on a clear day or on a clear night to walk alone on the riverbank. For the crocodiles might eat up—not the man, but his shadow. "And if your shadow is dead, how can you ever become a god?"

This idea of religion as the outgrowth of shadow-worship, con-

tends Sir James Frazer, is only part of the story. The primary urge to religion springs from the childlike human wonder in the presence of a mystery. The savages found themselves in a world of invisible power—today we call it a world of intangible energy—and they concluded that this power is divided into spirits that reside not only in the bodies of men but in all the objects of nature. These spirits became gods and goddesses for the Greeks, angels and demons for the Hebrews, jinns and ifrits for the Arabians, giants and elves for the Germans, leprechauns and gnomes for the Irish, the genii of the winds and the woods and the rivers and the seas for all mankind. The devout Walt Whitman talks of the "living beings, identities now doubtless near us in the air that we know not of." And even the skeptical Anatole France expressed his conviction that we are surrounded by living spirits too subtle for the observation of our human senses.

Religion, then, in the opinion of Sir James Frazer, arose out of the universal adoration for the invisible spirits of the world. These spirits, believed our primitive cousins, must be treated with reverential care. The islanders of Molucca were equally afraid of hurting "a tree blossoming with flowers and a woman blossoming with child." The inhabitants of Amoyna refrained from loud noises in the presence of a growing rice-field for fear that it might "miscarry into an abortion of weeds." And the American Indians ascribed their misfortune to the "departure of the spirits" from the trees cut down by the white men.

The ancients revered this "residing and guiding" spirit not only in every object of the earth but in every star. "They are marching gods in the heavens." And so the origin of religion is to be sought not so much in the fear of dead shadows as in the worship of living souls.

But perhaps, declare the less romantic scholars, religion began in the prosaic human desire to propitiate the wild animals that made life so precarious in the early days. At first it was the ferocity of the animals—the snake, the tiger, the wolf—that was feared and revered. Later on, the idea became anthropomorphic. That is, the animal-gods became translated into men-gods. But the characteristics were the same. Jehovah, for example, is a ferocious and capricious God. Moloch devours little children. Sahu—an Egyptian



star-divinity—feeds on his fellow-gods three times a day. Baal demands the sacrifice of the first-born. Adoni loves to drink the blood of the priests. The same is true of nearly all the gods of the primitive tribes. They possess the fury and the violence and the appetites of wild beasts.

The primitive idea of animals turned into gods, observe these unromantic scholars, has come right down through the ages. The Greeks talked of "ox-vised Hera" and of "owl-eyed Athene." The Hebrews worshiped the dove; and the Christians, the lamb. The Hindus adore the sacred cow; the American Red Men attach themselves to the eagle, the buffalo, the wolf, and the deer; and many of the American White Men enroll themselves in the Order of the Elks and the Moose.

And thus there are different theories as to the origin of religion among men. Perhaps there is a grain of truth in all of them. Human psychology is as wide as human experience; and the origin of any emotional custom or intellectual idea is a confluence of many waters into a single stream. Yet underlying all these theories there is a universal human desire. A desire for protection against danger, security from fear, community in the darkness under a guiding spirit of light. The origin of religion is the hope and the love that promise the protection and the perpetuation of human life. Nature seems so full of gods because the human heart is so full of God.

### *The Earliest Religions of the Orient*

In the dawn of history we find the Sumerian God, Shamash ("Light of the Sun"), enthroned as the ruler of all the other gods. But almost equal in dignity with Shamash was Ninkarsag, the "Sorrowing Mother of Men," who interceded in their behalf against the decrees of the sterner gods.

These lesser gods were cruel in their demands. They insisted upon a plentiful diet of fruits and vegetables and animals and men. Throughout the history of religion the gods are pictured as possessing greater powers, but no better morals, than their earthly protégés. Men do not create but merely delineate their gods after their own image. They refine their gods along with themselves. As the Sumerians became more civilized, they substituted animal

flesh for human flesh—not only upon their own tables but upon the tables of the gods. A sacrificial tablet of Sumeria tells us that “the lamb is the substitute for mankind; the lamb goes to its death, and the man proceeds to a happier life.”

As time went on, the sacrificial lamb gave way to an offering even more acceptable in the eyes of the gods. This new offering was a sacrificial heart. The Sumerian king, Gudea, in his prayer to the Mother Goddess, gave the first historic expression to this refined concept of the religious life:

O my Queen, the Mother of Gods and Men,  
The people whom thou beholdest are rich in power.  
Render thou them also rich in compassion . . .  
O my Goddess, my Mother, my Friend,  
Thou hast given me the breath of life;  
Give unto me also the breath of goodness,  
For thou knowest what is good . . .  
Under thy protection I will reverently dwell;  
In the shelter of thy shadow I will find my peace.

The religion of the Egyptians, like that of the Sumerians, began in cruelty and developed into mercy. Originally the world—that is, the land of Egypt—was ruled by Father Heaven and Mother Nile. And these two were attended by an innumerable hierarchy of divinities—the sun-god Horus, who flew daily like a falcon over the earth to observe whether men paid their devotions to heaven; the cow-goddess Hathor, whose sky-vaulted belly suckled her innumerable offspring, the stars; the crocodile-gods and the lion-gods and the snake-gods who loved to eat men, and the tree-gods and the spring-gods and the seed-gods who desired to feed and to protect them.

And all these gods, the evil among them on the one side and the good on the other, fought a continual battle for supreme power. But little by little, as the character of the Egyptians became more refined, the evil gods gave way before the good. And Isis, the Goddess of Fertility, came to the throne. “It is Isis who conquers death through life . . . who gives growth to the sowing in the field and the seeds in the womb.” The season of her special activity was December, “when the old sun has run its course and the new

sun is coming into birth." At that period the priests adorned her temple with a representation of "Mother Isis suckling her newborn babe, the sun-god Horus." It has always been the instinct of man to translate the divine into the human. For in this way he transmutes the human into the divine.

And then came the final effort in Egypt to bring God and Man more closely together. About 1400 years before the birth of Jesus, a new Pharaoh ascended the throne. His name was Ikhnaton. Like the later prophets of Israel, he found that the religion of the Egyptians had become an instrument for the enrichment of the priests. "The hearts of men would be pure but that the words of the priests corrupt them." There were too many words about too many gods. "In reality," said Ikhnaton, "there is but one God."

This was the first pronouncement of monotheism in the history of the world.

But Ikhnaton was not content with the mere annunciation of one God. Like King David, he wrote passionate poems to his glory. Note the almost Hebraic fervor in the following words quoted from the translation of one of his poems:

Thy dawning is beautiful in the horizon of the sky,  
O living Lord, Creator of Life.  
When thou risest on the rim of the horizon,  
Thou fillest every land with thy beauty . . .  
Thou givest breath to all creatures on earth,  
And thou bindest them together with thy love . . .  
Thy footprints are the day; and thy stepping-stones, the stars of  
the night . . .  
In thy smile the cattle repose upon the fields,  
The trees and the grasses flourish,  
The birds flutter in the marshes,  
Their wings uplifted in adoration.  
The sheep dance upon their feet,  
And the winged creatures fly.  
All things come to life when thou hast smiled upon them . . .  
Thou art the Lord of love,  
Creator of the earth in the image of thy heart,  
Planter of the seed in man,  
Nourisher of the soil in woman . . .  
How excellent is thy design,

O Lord of the Universe,  
One God, One Father to all mankind,  
Guardian of the Nile in Egypt,  
And the life-giving Nile in the heavens,  
For the cattle and the men of every land.

Here we have the earliest human conception of one God, one destiny, one confederation of all living creatures under the guidance of the Lord of Love. When Ikhnaton's coffin was opened within recent years, his last prayer was found engraved upon a piece of gold foil:

"Give me thy hand, and I know that I shall not be led astray."

### *The Religion of Moses*

The Law of Moses, observed Renan, is "the tightest garment into which life was ever laced." It hampered the movements of the Jews—and it hampers them to this very day—but it kept them upright and warm. For it bound them closely to the inflexible will and the parental affection of God. "Hear, O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One."

The Books of Moses represented not a new religion, but rather a renewal of what was best in the old religions. And this may be said of all the other great religions of the world. Every one of them is a restatement of the old truths to fit the idiom and to meet the requirements of the new day. The religion of Moses included many elements of the earlier religions. It borrowed from them the stories of the Creation, of Paradise, of the Tree of Knowledge and of the Flood, as well as the idea of One God emerging out of the obscurity of many gods. In Genesis, God is called sometimes by a plural name, *Elohim*, and sometimes by a singular name, *Jehovah*. The distinction is confused until we get well along into the Old Testament.

But when the idea of One God becomes clear, we see in Him the commander and the guide of a nomadic tribe in the desert. This terrible Lord of the Desert, unlike Ikhnaton's smiling Shepherd of the Nile, is pictured as riding in the whirlwind, shouting in the thunder, and reclining in a tent of colorful splendor at the setting of the sun. He is a God who leads his people by day in a column

of clouds; and by night, in a pillar of fire. He demands their absolute obedience upon the pain of death, leads them into battle, smites their enemies, changes His mind like the wind, is jealous of the other gods, quick to avenge an insult, and ready if necessary to break His word. Yet He is a God who watches over His people in their sleep, feeds them with manna when they are awake, and fortifies them against their sufferings in the wilderness with the hope of a Promised Land.

He is a God who terrifies the wayward and the strong, but who protects the righteous and the weak. He is generous to the stranger, merciful to the fatherless, charitable to the poor and, in the equal dispensation of his justice, impartial to all. He is a God, in short, who possesses the faults and the virtues of the Arabian Bedouin—the image, magnified to superhuman proportions, of Moses himself.

“And the inspirations of men are translated into the commandments of God.” There is a legend that Moses found the Ten Commandments not upon the heights of Sinai but within the depths of his own heart. Originally, continues the legend, there were two Bibles. “The first Bible was written on high, upon the sapphire of heaven; the second was written below, upon the granite of the earth . . . The first Bible”—the Bible Universal—“spoke the language of God; the second speaks the language of Moses.”

And there is another legend: When the inspiration came upon him to interpret the word of God, Moses was reluctant to speak. For he believed that his people were not deserving of so precious a gift—“neither the present generation nor the generations to come. For how can I bring the light to them that have no eyes to see?”

But when he had given them his Bible, and was preparing to come into the Promised Land, Jehovah shook His head. “You cannot enter it because of your sins.”

“Have I then sinned against God?”

“No, but you have sinned against man. You have doubted his instinctive hunger for the light . . . It is true that man is cowardly, bestial, envious, lustful, lying, faithless, murderous and perverse. Yet what are you yourself if not a man? And if *you* have understood my teaching, why do you doubt that your *fellow men* shall some day understand it?”

"But they are so slow to learn!"

"They have all eternity for their learning. Men must be patient, and I shall be patient along with them."

And thus it was that the Jews started upon their journey down the centuries, with their "Portable Fatherland"—the words are Heinrich Heine's—inscribed upon their hearts.

### *Thus Spake Zarathustra*

Zoroaster—or, as the Persians called him, Zarathustra—"was born in a ray of the sun and died in a flash of lightning." And his mission in life was "to bring light to the children of darkness."

There are those who doubt that Zoroaster, or Moses, or even Jesus, ever lived. A rather ridiculous attitude, it seems. For, however we may deny these living men, we cannot deny their living words. We can say of Zoroaster what Mark Twain said of Shakespeare. If it wasn't he who wrote the books ascribed to him, it was another fellow by the same name.

The book known as the Bible of Zoroaster is the *Avesta*, the Persian Gospel of Wisdom, handed down to him "directly from heaven by Ahura-Mazda, the Lord of Light." Under the revelation of this light "the bull-gods and the jackal-gods and the tiger-gods were swept out of the world so that Ahura-Mazda might be enthroned as the One God of the heavens and the earth."

But in His effort to enlighten the world, God is thwarted by the Devil, Ahriman—the Prince of Darkness. God creates all the good things in the world; and the Devil, all the evil things. And the good and the evil are in continual strife, and the heart of man is caught between the two and knows not which way to turn.

"Yet the good shall prevail in the end" For God is not only All-powerful but All-wise. He has foreseen the struggle and he has prepared for its favorable outcome through the one invincible weapon—the righteous man.

The creation of the righteous man, however, "is no easy matter—even for the Lord of Light." Ahura-Mazda conducted many an experiment with his human clay before he could approximate the ideal of his heart. He placed his first Man and his first Woman—

the Adam and Eve of the Persian scripture—in an earthly Paradise; and He gave them all the good things thereof for their food and their drink.

And these two, the father and the mother of mankind, lived in Paradise and worshiped God and produced a race of children who fell under the spell of Ahriman, the Weaver of Lies. And God sent upon them a flood of melting snows. And in this flood all perished save a faithful few. "Out of these faithful few shall come the seed of the Savior—the Righteous Man who shall redeem the world."

For the Righteous Man will establish on earth a new life of Good Thoughts, Good Words, and Good Deeds—"the lanterns that will guide our footsteps in our pilgrimage from this world into the next."

This pilgrimage, declared Zoroaster, does not end in death. For death is merely a pause at the crossroads and a turning either to the light or to the dark. When a good man dies, his integrity appears before him in the shape of a beautiful young girl "whose fragrance is like the combined fragrance of all the flowers on earth." And when an evil man dies, his iniquity rises up against him in the form of an ugly old hag "whose stench is like the combined stench of all the dunghills on earth." And the souls of these dead are taken, each by his "self-created guide," to the Bridge of the Sifting. "And he who is of the righteous, passeth over this bridge on the ascent and goeth unto Heaven, the abode of light and the house of song . . . But he who is of the wicked, falleth from the head of the bridge head foremost into Hell, an abyss of terror and darkness and tortures and tears."

And from this destiny—a destiny shaped by our own deeds—it is beyond the power of any mortal to escape. "Not even those may escape it who go down deep, like the Turkish prince Afrasyab, who built himself a palace under the earth, a thousand times as high as a man . . . In that palace he made the moon and the stars and the sun, to give him light and to give him warmth . . . In that palace he did whatever he pleased, and he lived a life of great happiness and strength . . . Yet with all his witchcraft he was unable to escape from Destiny and Death."

But in the end, declared Zoroaster, Death himself shall die.

"When the final punishment and the final reward have been meted out, the dead shall rise, life shall return to their bodies and they shall breathe again." And the Kingdom of Righteousness shall be established on earth. And Mazda, the Lord of Light, shall reign supreme. "And night shall be turned into day, and the darkness shall be blotted out from the eyes and the hearts of men . . . And all the world shall then become an iceless and slopeless plain"—the Persians dreaded the mountains, the "lurking places" of the marauders who robbed them of their possessions and of the winds that despoiled them of their health—"and life shall become painless and deathless and guiltless, and free from all malice or fear."

But this Paradise on earth was a long way off. And in the meantime, Zoroaster's prophetic vision "leaped up to heaven in a flash of lightning." Translated into prosaic words, the metaphor means that Zoroaster was burned to death when a group of fanatics set fire to his house. "And then, having killed their Savior, they put on his robes and built him a temple and proceeded to kill others in his name."

For such is the history of many a religion. The prophet is crucified, his memory is adored, and his teaching is forgotten. And thus we find the religious spirit of man all too frequently channeled away from a flowing stream of compassion into a stagnant pool of hatred—from a living faith into a lifeless creed. It is unfair to blame religion for the injustices committed in its name. Many a noble idea has been made to subserve ignoble ends. The trouble lies not with the idea but with the inability of the human mind to grasp it. When a teacher comes to us with a great truth, our cramped intelligence can retain very little more than the teacher's name. And this, perhaps, is why the universal truth of religion is brought home to us again and again, always from a new angle and under a different guise.

For always there are a few who understand. "And these understanding few shall ultimately enlighten the world."

### *The Religions of India*

In India, the universality of religion was translated into various forms—Shivaism, Jainism, Hinduism, Brahmanism, Buddhism. But,



in their final analysis, they all add up to the same thing—the desire of man to discover his whereabouts upon the spiritual map of the universe.

Originally the Hindus, in common with many of the other ancient races, were animal and ancestor and nature worshipers. Every living object—and to the primitives, *every* object was alive—had its spirit, or god, who looked after its welfare in the competitive turmoil of existence. But as time went on, and the multitudinous minds of the world grew friendlier with understanding, the competition gave way to coöperation. And the quarreling lesser gods became united under the peaceful reign of Varuna, the custodian of the heavenly bodies and of human justice.

But this religion became corrupted into a business of selling divine favors for human fees. And there arose a number of religious leaders who tried to drive the “prayer-merchants” out of the temples, so that these temples might “once more become the abodes of the pure souls”—of all human souls merging in the divine soul of God.

For every man is at one with every other man, and all men are at one with the world. This idea is vividly expressed in an ancient Hindu parable:

“Tell me, Master, what is the soul? And what is its relation to all the other souls?”

“Very well, bring me a fig from that tree.”

“Here it is, Master.”

“Divide it.”

“It is divided, Master.”

“And what do you see there?”

“Seeds, Master, very fine seeds.”

“Take now one of the seeds and divide it.”

“It is divided, Master.”

“And what do you see now?”

“Nothing at all, Master.”

“This, my son, is the soul of the fig. This fine essence which you can not perceive—this is the essence of the fig, of the tree, of all the trees, of the entire world.”

This essence of the world is the invisible divine power, the spiritual sieve that sifts the lives of all created things, through a

process of many transmigrations, until they become purified and absorbed into the Selfless Life of God.

This idea is at the heart of all the Hindu religions. It is symbolized in the dance of Shiva—the temporary dissolution of all individual lives in death, and their final resurrection into a united, universal and immortal Being. It is emphasized in the principle of *ahimsa*—compassion toward all living creatures—as advocated by the Jainists. “For all things are related through their numberless reincarnations; and when you hurt any living creature, you are only hurting yourself.” More than that, you are hurting the Totality of Life, toward which your personal life is sailing as toward a shining goal. This doctrine finds further expression in Hinduism, whose chief divinity, Vishnu, became man out of his love for mankind. Known in his earthly incarnation as Krishna, he performed miracles of healing, helped the poor, fed the hungry, and championed the weak—and was rewarded with a crucifixion upon a tree. “But it is of no account. For I shall not die. Nor shall any man die. In the end we shall all be fused into one Eternal Life.” And this same idea is incorporated into the doctrine of Brahmanism that “no creature is distinct from myself, and there is no such thing as above or below, strong or weak, master or slave.” *Your* weakness is *my* weakness; and *my* strength, *your* strength. All of us are constantly interchanging our souls, from incarnation to incarnation, so that we may get the *feel* of one another. And this fellow-feeling of one all-embracing existence will come to some of us soon, to all of us in the end.

So let us bear the world’s evil in patience, and our own suffering in silence. For evil and suffering—punishments for the sins we have committed in our past lives—are but temporary prison sentences. They will be forgotten, like yesterday’s wind, in the eternal calm of the Nirvana which is the destiny of us all.

This all-inclusive Nirvana—the goal of identical Being through the path of universal love—is most adequately expressed in the religion of Buddha.

The son of a prince, Buddha gave up his kingdom in order to find happiness. Formerly a warrior, “he laid aside the cudgel and the sword”—wrote his disciples—“and now he dwells compassionate and kind to all creatures that have life.” For one day, as he sat

meditating under a tree, "a sweet and melodious thought descended upon him"—the revelation of religion, the binding power of life.

The aim of all religion and the goal of all existence, declared Buddha, is peace. Life is a succession of births and sufferings and killings and rebirths. "With divine and purified vision"—as he sat under the bo-tree—"I saw beings pass away and being reborn, low and high, of good and bad character, in happy or miserable surroundings, according to their deserts in some previous life."

This, then, was the cause of all human suffering—the necessity of rebirth to atone for the errors of a former birth. And this was to be the cure—a life so absorbed in compassion that no further return to earth would be necessary. For then the soul, having fulfilled its earthly task, would be allowed to merge into the harmony of the World-Soul.

All life, said Buddha, is an educational journey from earth to heaven—a gradual interblending of the part with the whole. Every mortal travels through many lives and many deaths before he can reach the final blessedness of immortality. And this immortality is not *individual* but *social*. To crave for personal immortality, declared Buddha, is to indulge the part at the expense of the whole. All human misery is the result of our selfish ambition for personal bliss. We are not separate islands, but waters of one sea. And he who understands this truth will subordinate his petty little self for the larger self of humanity. He will prepare himself, in other words, to break away from his weary succession of pilgrimages on earth so that he may stand purified before the Gates of Eternal Rest.

This Eternal Rest, this Buddhist Nirvana, is "the complete extinction of all bodily desire." *Nir* means *out*, and *va* means *to blow*. Heaven is "a *blowing out* of the flame of selfish passion"—the extinguishment of the candle of sorrow in the peaceful quiet of the night. "Everything in life gives cause for fear," writes the Buddhist philosopher, Bhartri-hari, "and the only freedom from fear is to be found in the cessation of life." And therefore the highest gift from heaven, in the words of Mahatma Gandhi, "is never to be reborn." The customary greeting among the early Buddhists was, "Peaceful release to all living things."

The peaceful selflessness of renunciation, of sympathy not only toward every man of every creed but toward every form of life.

"Thou shalt not injure any living creature." Buddha taught the gospel of piety and pity. "Go into the lands," he said to his disciples, "and preach mercy. Tell them that the poor and the rich, the lowly and the high, are all one, and that all men are united in religion as all the sunbeams are united in the sun."

### *Religion Without God—Confucianism*

The Chinese are perhaps the most devout, and at the same time the most rational, people on earth. Originally they believed in about *sixty million* Gods. At the time of Confucius they denied the existence of *any* God. At present they recognize only *One* God—Confucius.

The early Chinese—"the history of our Middle Kingdom began 25,000 years ago"—were, like many other ancient peoples, nature worshipers and spirit worshipers. The divine spirits of heaven resided not only in every *thing* but in every *thought*. They formed an invisible living chain of energy that held "stars and rivers and mountains and men" from falling apart. "What is it that binds them all together? It is the Divine Principle of Tao; it is the regularity that makes order out of disorder; it is the power that keeps the stars from dropping out of the sky, the waters from spilling out of the ocean, and men from deserting their families and their friends."

As time advanced and the Chinese began to philosophize, the principle of Tao—the Way of Life—assumed a double meaning. It became for the uncultured masses a Divine Personality, and for the educated classes an Impersonal Law.

But, whether personal or impersonal, the Chinese religion was based upon the idea of continuity. All life is a golden thread that binds generation to generation in a sacrament of parental wisdom and filial respect. Nowhere else has the custom of ancestral worship so taken hold of the people. The peasants and the laborers are tied to their ancestors—that is, to tradition—out of fear; the thinkers and the teachers, out of reverence. All of them alike offer food and prayers to the souls of the departed.

For food is a symbolical sustenance of life—"our loved ones are still alive and in our midst;" and prayer is an intimate conversation

between understanding hearts. "All of us are a united family of enduring life."

The ancestor-worship of the Chinese helped to keep them not only united but at peace. For they regarded it a sacrilege to mutilate in battle the graves of the dead—"the common concern of our ancestral love."

This, in brief, was the situation when Confucius came upon the scene. "Our master," observed one of his disciples, "never speaks of God. But he always speaks in praise of our ancient men." Confucius refused to speak of God, he said, because he knew nothing about Him—"not even that He exists." He was interested in only one subject—"the pervading unity of mankind."

And this subject, said Confucius, was not original with him. "Our ancestors were aware of this unity for many thousands of years." Confucius regarded himself, therefore, not as a teacher of the new, but as a popularizer of the old. He reinterpreted the religion of the past in the language of his own day.

The highest purpose of religion, declared Confucius, is to regulate the life of this world—"I know nothing of the next world." This regulation begins with the investigation of life. "Our ancestors, having investigated life, increased their knowledge. Having increased their knowledge, they purified their thoughts. Having purified their thoughts, they rectified their hearts. Having rectified their hearts, they harmonized their characters. Having harmonized their characters, they adjusted their family life. And having adjusted their family life, they brought justice to the state."

This is at the core of the Confucian religion and the Confucian philosophy. The business of life is to advance from individual knowledge to social justice. A pure heart is the concomitant of an informed mind. Religion, said Confucius, is a golden stairway of many steps. And we must learn to climb them in an orderly manner, all of us together; and each of us must be careful not to step in his brother's way but rather to help along if his brother happens to stumble or to fall out of breath. And the end of the climb is not from earth to heaven, but from perversity to peace. "Let each of us cultivate himself with reverential care, and we shall have no need to look for a heaven hereafter. For we shall have established heaven right here and now."

"The Heaven of the Great Identity"—the identification of man with man in the spiritual Republic of the World.

Yet for the scholarly men of China it was a Heaven without a God—until Confucius himself was deified in the stubborn human hunger for the divine. "Confucius refused to call himself God-like. Very well, we shall call God Confucius-like." For the benign wisdom of Confucius must be closely allied to a benign power in Heaven.

And so Confucius was enthroned as God, the Ruler of Paradise and the Father of Mercy. And to this day the Chinese worship at the shrine of their Celestial Ancestor, Confucius.

But this worship, especially among the intelligent, is a spiritual and not a material faith. The Chinese try to follow the teachings of Confucius rather than to bow before his image. Like the Hebrews, the Chinese are "rationalistic iconoclasts." The conception of God, they maintain, is too profound to be reduced to any material form. Even the universe is no adequate image of God. "No idol-maker worships his idols," observed a Chinese philosopher. "For he knows what stuff they are made of."

Hence the religion of Confucius, as interpreted in the more enlightened circles of China today, is based upon three cardinal principles: indifference to outward form, respect for honest conviction, and reciprocal affection between man and man. Among the unintelligent masses, to be sure, superstition and idolatry are rampant still. But isn't this true of practically every creed? "What is religion?" asked a disciple of Confucius. And Confucius, somewhat cynically, replied: "Religion is an idea misinterpreted by the many, understood by the few, and practiced by none."

Yet however misapplied or misunderstood, the instinct for religion springs eternal in the human heart. For religion is faith, and hope, and love—the three most powerful incentives to the preservation of life.

### *Paganism*

There is a wider world beyond the world we live in. This was the sustaining principle of Paganism as of all the other great religions. The outward invisible world, believed the Pagans, is not a

departure from, but a continuation of, our visible world. The human is extended into the divine.

And so the Pagan philosophers interpreted the universe in terms of the human body and of the human mind. The Greek and the Roman gods were the representations of the infinite capacity of man. "There is a likeness in character between Heaven and Earth," wrote Maximus of Tyre; "and therefore it is the custom of the Greeks to picture the sublime as the most beautiful aspect of the human." Aphrodite (Venus) is the ideal loveliness of woman; Apollo, the ideal loveliness of man. The devout Pagan was as close to the heart of the universe as the devout Hindu or Zoroastrian or Buddhist or Confucian or Christian or Jew. For all devotion is one.

Every man's soul is a magnifying mirror. He looks within himself, and sees the world. This, in its finer aspect, was the spirit of Paganism. At heart, as Plato and Aristotle knew, it was monotheistic. The so-called *gods* were merely the different attributes of *God*. The religion of the ancient Greeks, writes Professor Gilbert Murray, begins "at the very bottom" and reaches "the very summits" of the human intellect. "There is hardly any horror of primitive superstition of which we cannot find some distant traces in our Greek record. There is hardly any height of spiritual thought attained in the world that has not its archetype or its echo" in the literature of the Pagan Greeks. It was no "uncivilized idolatry" or "heathen nature-worship"—the commonly accepted definitions of Paganism—that produced the fervor of Aeschylus and of Sophocles, "the two most religious writers in the history of the drama."

These two dramatists, in common with many other intelligent Pagans, found in "the living spirits of nature" the undying spirit of man. Thus Zeus—who came down in a golden shower (of rain and sun) to impregnate Danaë—represented the productivity of nature and of man; Athene symbolized the order of nature and the wisdom of man; Demeter—goddess of the corn—typified the resurrection of spring out of winter and of hope out of despair; and Dionysus—lord of laughter—stood for the irresistible outpouring of nature into a life-stream of joy. In the religion of the Greeks, a god could become a man, and a man could become a god. There was a continual meeting and mating between gods and men—a mystical

communion between the divine and the human, the spirit and the flesh, immortality and life.

Thus believed the intellectual Greeks. As for the masses, they needed a more concrete staff to sustain the faith of their feeble imaginations. And so their religious leaders gave them a myth to bolster their social consciousness and their personal hope. In this myth—celebrated at the season of the Holy Mysteries—the Lord of Heaven begot a Son, Zagreus, through a mortal Virgin, Kore. But the Titans, the Evil Spirits of the world, tore Zagreus asunder and were then blasted by a thunderbolt for their sins. And thereafter, all men born were given bodies shaped out of the ashes of the Titans and souls made out of the blood of Zagreus. "And Zagreus was received into Heaven and looks down with compassion upon all men . . . But the Son of God is not only above us but within us . . . Let us therefore worship Him with the fulness of joy in our hearts, and with the fulness of love toward one another." For God is in us all, and all of us are one in God.

### *Christianity*

New religions are born in times of stress. When man's spirit is low, he needs to be re-assured that "God's in His heaven, and all's right with the world." And this reassurance never fails. The great prophets come into the world when there is the greatest need of them. At the birth of Jesus, humanity was writhing under the lash of the Roman policy to divide and conquer and kill. Murder had become organized as a business on the battlefield and a sport in the arena. The Roman people were fed upon a diet of "bread and blood." The gladiators, recruited largely from among the prisoners of war, were driven to their fight with whips and hot irons. And when one of them was wounded, it was generally "thumbs down"—a signal by the audience that he was to be put to death. For the public, trained in warfare, cruelty and lust, regarded life as of little worth. There was no telling when the next fellow's turn might come—at the general's command, the jailer's summons, or the emperor's whim.

Such was the uncertainty of the individual's fate within Rome itself. In the subject provinces—and Palestine was among them—



the individual was even more exposed to the fury of the Roman power. For the provincials were "foreigners"—and "a foreigner counts less than a dog." The young Jews who were recruited to fight in the Roman wars were assigned to "the hot and malarial and swampy lands where, if they survive the battlefield, they will die of disease." And the older folk, though useless for the fight, were a good source of plunder for the tax-gatherers of Rome.

The system of taxation in the Roman provinces was as ingenious as it was cruel. It was called "tax-farming." A "gentleman-farmer" would organize a company to pay a specific sum to the government for the right to collect taxes in a country like Egypt or Parthia or Palestine. The territory under contract would be under the exclusive "cultivation" of the company. This territory would then be "plowed" to produce as much money as possible for the company; and the company, after paying the specified sum to the government, would keep the balance as its profit.

This policy of "pay-as-little-and-collect-as-much-as-you-can" resulted in extortion and starvation and terror and death. "Give unto Caesar not only the things that are Caesar's but also the things that are yours." Life had become spiritless and repulsive and absurd. Time for a new hope, a new Messiah, a new faith in the dignity of man and the goodness of God.

And Christianity provided this hope, this Messiah, this faith. It brought home to every man the conviction that his work and his life were dear to God. It taught him to see God "in all that liberates and lifts, in all that humbles, sweetens and consoles." God came down to earth that man might come up to heaven. "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people; for I am always with you, leading you by the hand, even through the valley of the shadow of death."

The followers of Jesus believed in him because they believed in the ultimate goodness of life. They were sad, simple creatures who, under all their irony and disappointment, felt the stirring of pity, of holiness, of love. They were quite right to leave the older creeds behind. For their new problems needed to be interpreted into a new language. And they were equally right in adopting, for their new creed, the most beautiful myths and customs of the older creeds. For the language of beauty is the same under all disguises and faiths.

Christianity—a simple religion for simple folk, a profound philosophy for the wisest of scholars. A gospel of the Brotherhood of Man under the Fatherhood of God. A promise of the Kingdom of Heaven for the enslaved and the terrorized and the friendless and the sick. A thorough cleansing of the money-changers from the Temple, and of oppression and superstition and hatred from the human heart. An all-embracing faith for every man of good will—Samaritan as well as Galilean, Gentile as well as Jew. No one, declared Jesus, has a mortgage upon the lovingkindness of God. Yet the generosity of God toward men requires a reciprocal generosity among all mankind. From each according to his strength and his means—the buried talent from the rich, the widow's mite from the poor. "There are no privileges," writes H. G. Wells, "no rebates, and no excuses in the Kingdom of Heaven."

In this Kingdom of Heaven there was to be no rank, no servility or arrogance, no privation or private wealth. "And there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? There is none good but One—and that is, God. Thou knowest the commandments: Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honor thy father and thy mother. And he answered and said unto him, Master, all these things have I observed from my youth. Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me."

But the man, too fond of his riches, was not ready for the Christian Brotherhood. "And he was sad at the words of Jesus, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions. And Jesus looked round about, and said unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the Kingdom of God! And the disciples were astonished at his words." Here, indeed, was a new religious idea—a communist denunciation of private property! "But Jesus answered again, and said unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the Kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God!"

It isn't wealth that matters; nor the sanctification of the Sabbath—"the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath;" nor the lip-service of praises and prayers—"this people honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me." The only thing that counts is a disinterested service based upon an infinity of love, and with no other reward save a grateful repayment of love. "Whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be the servant of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." And the sum and substance of his ministry was simply this: "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."

Not, perhaps, in this world, but in the next. Without immortality, the Christian religion, *all* religion, *all life*, is without meaning. It is a drama devoid of a rational plot. But the human heart demands a reason for existence, a solution to the mystery, a compensation for suffering, an answer to hope. Why was this drama ever written, unless somebody is trying to say something? To this question Christianity, like every other great religion, tries to supply the only satisfactory answer. The drama of humanity has been written in order that men may be united in immortal life.

The clearest expression of this idea of immortality in the New Testament is to be found in the words of Saint Paul—a man with a (Pagan) Greek training and, like Jesus, with a Hebrew background. (All religious inspiration stems from the selfsame source.) An immortal destiny, declares Saint Paul, awaits all men, Jew and Gentile alike . . . "For (in the eyes of the Lord) there is no distinction between Gentile and Jew." Jesus sacrificed himself, not for one creed or for one group, but for all religion and for all mankind. And his resurrection after his death was a proof to all the world that there is a resurrection after *every* death. "*There is no death.*"

What we call "dying" is merely the germination of the body into the soul. "But some will say, How are the dead raised? . . . Thou foolish one, what thou sowest is not made alive except it die." The seed must rot in the earth that the plant may grow into the air. "That which thou sowest is not quickened, unless it die. And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not the body (destined for resurrection), but the bare grain."

Let us therefore be resolute in hope when we see the "grain" of our beloved laid away in the ground. Their soul shall rise above it.

Every death means a growing into a more abundant life. The old life "is sown in corruption, and is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, and is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, and is raised in power; it is sown in a body . . . (which) is of the earth, earthy; it is raised in a body . . . (which) is from heaven, heavenly . . ."

And how can we best prepare ourselves for this immortal life? Through the practical realization that "just as there are many parts united in our human bodies . . . so we form one body in our union with God, and we are individually parts of one another."

Therefore, urged Paul, "love ye one another . . . be unfailing in hospitality . . . live in harmony with one another . . . and at peace with all mankind."

This, then, is the inspiration, and this the hope, that Christianity holds out to every son of man in his living communion with the Son of God. This is the purity of the Christian faith upon which all Christians of good faith are substantially agreed. The different sects—with their dissimilar rituals and prayers—are different only in externals. More and more clearly among the Christians, as among all the other religious bodies of the world, the truly devout are arriving at the conviction that the selfsame spirit can be clothed in a variety of forms. It is not the outer vestment that counts, but the heart within.

### *The Religion of the Moslems*

The Mohammedan word *moslem*, or *muslim*, means *a man attuned to the will of God*. The Moslem religion was nothing new—it was the world-wide religion of old presented in an Arabian dress. Mohammed as a young man was a camel-driver in a caravan—heaven can use the humble as well as the mighty for its interpreters. In the course of his travels he met all sorts of people—Buddhists and Pagans and Confucians and Christians and Jews. And he noticed that all of them spoke of the selfsame mysterious power in different tongues and under different names. Zeus, Jupiter, Jehovah, Messiah, Christ. Most vivid of all to him was the name by which God was known to the Hebrews—*Eloha Hag'bor*—the Lord Almighty. The Hebrew language was so close to the Arabian that

it would be a simple matter to translate *Eloha Hag'bor* into *Allah Akbar*.

A new God for Mohammed's people. For they were in need of a new God. Their nature worship had degenerated into idol worship. They no longer revered the *spirit* of the world. Instead, they paid lip service, and sacrificed human lives, to the *things* of the world—images of wood and fragments of stone. Mohammed was a man of little learning but of great imaginative power. He could see through the stupidity of men and into the sublimity of nature. And he was a poet of unusual sensitivity. He suffered from a nervous disease that subjected him to dizzy spells. He saw strange sights and he had a peculiar ringing in his ears. He often left the caravan to "commune with himself" in the desert. Brooding over his own sadness, he sought to find—"written upon the sands and the stars"—the answer to the universal sadness of life.

Once a year, in the holy month of Ramadhan, he followed the Arabian custom and retired into a cave near his native city of Mecca. And there, for thirty days and thirty nights, he meditated upon the meaning of life. Sitting at the mouth of the cavern, and gazing at the miracle of the heavens and the earth, he tried to find a solution to the three perplexing questions of the ages: "Who am I? What am I destined for? And how can I best fulfil this destiny?" But the heavens hung over the earth like a heavy tent, and Allah refused to draw aside the curtain.

Once, however, when Mohammed was in his fortieth year, he returned from his meditations in the cave and proclaimed that Heaven had at last revealed the answer to his questions. "Gabriel, the Angel of Allah, has spoken to me, and he has proclaimed unto the world that the idols of our worship are nothing but lifeless things." There is no other god but Allah the All-powerful—Allah Akbar.

This was the re-interpretation of an idea that had already existed for thousands of years. Yet it fell like a thunderbolt upon the people of Mecca. "Most men are too lazy to think;" but they are not too lazy to revile the thinker. To deny the power of the idols, and to deprive them of their sacrifices of human flesh, was the very height of insanity. At first his "message" was greeted with an outburst of laughter. Who was this "scavenger of the camel-dung" to set him-

self up against the tradition of the gods? The adults pointed him out as "a lunatic who had better be watched," and the children ran after him and pelted him with stones.

It was a strange sort of lunacy that possessed this camel-driver of Mecca! A lunacy of love. (At that time, Mohammed had not as yet become converted to the gospel of the sword.) In spite of the ridicule and abuse, he went stubbornly ahead with his story. "In the silence of the night Gabriel came to me to speak of Allah the Compassionate." Mohammed refused to raise his hand, or even his voice, against those who struck him. "Why do you not curse your enemies?" a disciple asked him. And he replied: "I have been taught to pity, and not to curse."

At first this "deep-souled son of the wilderness" was able to get only a handful of followers. And he proclaimed to them the new-old religion of charity, of gentleness, of a universal meeting of human hearts. And of a hopeful resignation to the will and the wisdom of Allah. "For His will is the ocean in which our human desires are but drops of water; and His wisdom is the sun which puts to shame the murky flickerings of our mortal thoughts."

This is the "great deep law" of the world which Mohammed asked his followers to accept. To accept, to submit to it, to become absorbed into it. "I teach you the happiness of a united Heaven." *A Heaven for all*. One day, it is related, an ugly old woman came to Mohammed and threw herself at his feet, begging him to keep a place for her in Paradise. Annoyed at her persistence, and unable to get rid of her, he finally told her to begone. "A repulsive hag like yourself will never be admitted into Paradise!" The woman burst into tears, whereupon Mohammed hastened to add: "For at the threshold of Paradise, all repulsive women are changed into beautiful young maidens."

In this legend Mohammed is represented as merely living up to the principles of his own teaching. "What is a good deed?" asked one of his disciples. And he replied: "Anything that will bring a smile of joy upon the face of another."

And this, in the first flush of Mohammed's revelation, applied to all men. "Verily, those . . . who are Jews, and the Sabaeans, and the Christians . . . whosoever believes in God and does what is right . . . there is no fear for them, nor shall they grieve." And the

encompassing mercy of Allah included not only all men but all living creatures. "Animals, too, have souls like men . . . You will be rewarded, my brothers, if you are good to animals, if you feed them and still their thirst, for there is no animal in the air or on the earth that will not return to God."

This was the substance of Mohammed's religion. It was not a wonder-working religion. There was no room in it for miracles—that is, magical tricks. "I can work no miracles," said Mohammed. "I can only point out to you the greatest miracle of them all—the world." The sky with its sun and its stars. The clouds with their rain. The earth with its vegetation. The grass consumed by the cattle and transformed into milk. You and I, creatures born with intelligence, affection, compassion, hope. Think what the world would be without the miracle of life! Can you put this aside and look for the tricks of a magician to bolster your faith?

The faith of Mohammed pointed to the divine miracle of living things. To the equal destiny of all life. Though he spent a great part of his latter years in fighting—his bitterness at his persecution had turned the prophet into a soldier—his final word on life was *Salam*. "You shall sit facing one another, all grudges shall be taken out of your hearts, and your salutation shall be—*have peace*." We fret and we fight for our little earth-patches here below; "but I assure you, my brothers, there is heaven enough for us all."

### *Faith in Friendliness—George Fox*

It is characteristic of the great religious leaders, and of the more intelligent among their followers, that they do not blink at the injustice of the world. On the contrary, they fight against it; and many lay down their lives in the fight. Yet they are men of wide horizons. They see beyond the evils of the day to an ultimate good, and beyond the differences of the classes and the creeds to an ultimate unity. They are short-range rebels but long-range optimists.

One of the most ardent of optimistic rebels was George Fox, founder of the Society of Friends (or Quakers). "Perhaps the most remarkable incident in Modern History," writes Carlyle, "is not . . . the Battle of Austerlitz, Waterloo, Peterloo, or any other Battle; but an incident passed carelessly over by most Historians, and

treated with some degree of ridicule by others; namely, George Fox's making to himself a suit of Leather. This man, the first of the Quakers, and by trade a shoemaker, was one of those to whom, under purer or ruder form, the Divine Idea of the Universe is pleased to manifest itself, and . . . who are therefore rightly accounted Prophets, God-possessed."

This prophet in leather breeches and a broad-brimmed hat—as a protection against the weather—had left his shoe-shop in Leicestershire (July, 1643) and trudged off into the wilderness in search of God. He was disappointed with life. Continental Europe had been at war for almost a generation. England was embroiled in civil strife. The common people everywhere were "the footstools and the paving stones" of the conquerors and the kings. The funds for the fighting of the interminable wars were squeezed out of "the very lives" of the people. On one occasion, it is said, the royal tax collectors broke into a house, "emptied the pannikin" containing the baby's food, and carried it off. The world was going through a long winter of oppression and despair. High time for a springtime re-awakening of hope. And for a renewal of faith. George Fox was sick of "the empty, hollow casks" who had set themselves up as the religious guides of the people. "The earthly spirit of the priests wounded my life; and when I heard the bell toll to call people together to the steeple-house, it struck at my life; for it was just like a market bell, to gather people together that the priest might set forth his ware for sale."

When he asked one of the priests to tell him what was the matter with the world, the priest replied: "The matter is not with the world but with you, my son. Take a physic and all will be well." Religion, decided Fox, was not to be found in the church, nor wisdom in books. To get at them, he must look into the human heart.

He went through a four-year course of this heart-searching in the wilderness, and came out a humble but enlightened Bachelor of Faith. He now had a definite job—to convert the Christians to the religion of Christ. To teach them the "central peace" that lay at the heart of our agitated life. "I saw that there was an ocean of darkness and death; but an infinite ocean of light and love, which flowed over the ocean of darkness." And he was determined to steer the world "from the waters of death into the waters of life."



And so he gathered about him a company of "like-minded friends"—to start with, a "valiant sixty" which grew to fifty thousand in less than two years—and he organized them into the "children of the Light." A stubborn, determined and aggressive Battalion of Peace—whose only weapons, however, were faith, and hope, and love.

The Quakers—a name given them by their opponents because "they make everybody to quake at the word of the Lord"—composed one of the most exciting chapters in the history of religious thought. Far from being the somber anchorites who withdrew from a world of which they were afraid, they were a band of colorful and courageous "trouble-makers." Makers of trouble for the unjust, but active sowers of the seeds of mercy and publishers of the principle of equal freedom for all. "There is something of God in every man; therefore it behooves no man to humble himself before his brother."

Religion, said the Quakers, is not a matter of occasional worship; it is a spirit of lifelong wardship—a united duty for mankind to ward one another against hatred and injustice and pain. They told the fighters to lay down their arms, the masters to release their slaves, the judges to render their verdicts with pity, and the preachers to season their sermons with love. "Let us talk less about the terrors of hell, and more about the mercies of heaven."

In the active preaching of their faith, the early Quakers—like the early Christians—suffered every indignity and torture, at times even death. Yet "they wore their suffering, like their raiment, carelessly." On one occasion, when Fox was trying to tell the people "to stop *disputing* about Jesus and to start *obeying* him," he was "knocked down and kicked and trampled upon" until he lost consciousness. When he came to, he rose and addressed his assailant: "My friend, you seem to understand only the religion of the fist. Very well, strike again; here are my arms, my body, and my head." Whereupon the assailant took him at his word and knocked him down once more. Urged to take action against this man, Fox refused. "I have no quarrel with him. He has a quarrel with his own heart. Let his heart take action against him."

Fox spent many years of his life in prison. The jailers seem to think that religion can be confined in a cell, or driven out with a whip, or reduced to ashes at the stake. But Fox knew better. "The

power of God operates in the hearts of men, and nothing can divide it or stop it." This was the simple philosophy of his faith. This divine power—this divine *compassion*—"prompts us to desire that all people, out of all different judgments and professions, may be brought to love and unity with God and with one another." In his petition for tolerance addressed to the British king, Fox wrote: "We have been counted as sheep for the slaughter, persecuted and despised, beaten, stoned, wounded, stocked, whipped, imprisoned, shut off from our friends, denied needful sustenance for many days together, with other the like cruelties." Fox tried to shame injustice as the birthmark of an ignoble soul. "It is not an honor to manhood or to nobility to run upon harmless people."

But the powerful of the earth kept running upon him and his followers. And all this, "because we try to repeat the words of the prophet, who said, 'Nation shall not lift up sword against nation.'" All that Fox wanted to do was to translate religion from a word into a deed. Peace is not an ideal for some future time; *it is a commandment for today.*

As he lay on his death-bed, Fox summarized his Friendly Gospel of Peace in the instructions he gave to his followers: "Spread among your brothers everywhere the religion of the peaceful life . . . Teach them that there is in the whole world but a single temple—the heart of man. It is here, and not in a heaven above or in a steeple-house below, that you will find the holy habitation of God . . . God dwells in the human heart, in *every* human heart. For, in the divine scales of mercy, all men are equal . . ."

### *The Twilight of the Gods*

Elizabeth Barrett Browning has well, if somewhat bitterly, expressed the disbeliever's attitude toward religion:

Earth's crammed with heaven,  
And every common bush afire with God;  
But only he who sees, takes off his shoes—  
The rest sit round and pluck blackberries.

For a long time now—almost two hundred years—there has been a tendency to belittle the "burning bush" in our too-absorbing busi-

ness of blackberry picking. Our too close preoccupation with the material has blinded us to the spiritual. We not only *disregard* the "bush afire with God;" we try our best to *chop it down*. We have leveled the growing and living forests for the mechanical structures of stone and steel—monuments to the death of our human faith.

This tendency to "kill the old Gods" began with the French rationalists and has continued down to the Russian bolshevists.

One of the first of these modern blows "struck against heaven" came as a result of the earthquake at Lisbon, on All Saints' Day in 1755. In this earthquake there were 30,000 deaths, many of the victims having been trapped while they were at worship in the churches. "It is a visitation from heaven," said the clergy, "in punishment for the sins of the people."

No, said the philosopher Voltaire. It is rather a proof that there is no heaven, no God, no justice and no logic in the arrangement of the world so far as the welfare of man is concerned. He wrote a scathing poem against religion:

Mortal and pitiful you cry, "All's well!"  
The universe belies you, and your heart  
Refutes a hundred times your mind's conceit . . .  
What is the verdict of the vastest mind?  
Silence: the book of fate is closed to us . . .

Yet in spite of all the evidence to the contrary,

This world, this theater of pride and wrong,  
Swarms with sick fools who prate of happiness . . .

And then came the Seven Years' War between France and England—a "suicidal madness" over the "useless question" as to which of these countries should possess "a few acres of snow" in Canada. "If there is a God in heaven, either he is evil and *will* not stop such things, or he is feeble and *cannot* stop them." In either case, said Voltaire, he is of no concern to us. To a man who criticized his atheistic philosophy and who insisted that this is "the best of all possible worlds," Voltaire wrote: "When you have shown, in verse or otherwise, why so many men cut their throats in the best of all possible worlds, I shall be exceedingly obliged to you."

This skepticism about the goodness or even the existence of God found a ready soil in the mechanistic spirit of the age. "The world is a machine, uncreated, unguided, unchecked—running gradually down to a final stop." This idea of the world—a lightless and lifeless cinder drifting aimlessly through the skies in the process of extinction—was emphasized again and again in the scientific and philosophic writing of the nineteenth century. Existence, said Darwin, is apparently meaningless—a continual struggle of life against life. And therefore, concluded Marx, "religion is the opiate of the people"—a soporific administered to a sick world, to keep it resigned to its sickness. Continuing in the same strain, Ingersoll issued his defiant challenge to organized religion: "The church cannot touch, cannot crush, cannot starve, cannot stop or stay me. I will express what thousands of men think but dare not speak." And to the clergy he said: "You know that I know that you know that you don't know."

Ingersoll had defied the clergy. John Stuart Mill defied God Himself. "If such a being (as described in the churches) can sentence me to hell . . . to hell I will go."

While these writers were "demolishing" God, Herbert Spencer abolished the heaven in which God was supposed to have dwelt. There is no heaven above, he said, for the simple reason that there is no up or down, no center and no circumference in space. The earth is but a speck of dust in the universe, and nobody ever took the trouble to send anyone here for the redemption of a handful of microbes called men.

Yes, continued Nietzsche. Christianity is a myth, a fairy tale for children, a religion for slaves. "The Gods are dead. Can it be possible that the world is not as yet aware of it?" The most godly thing in the world, said this juggler of paradoxical phrases, is the conviction that there are no Gods. Why do we insist upon the legend that God created the world in His own image? It would be much more logical to say that "a donkey created the world in his own image—that is, as stupid as possible."

And so Nietzsche slew God, and loathed himself for the murder, and pitied "all those who, like myself, suffer from the great loathing, for whom the old God died and no new God lieth in cradles and napkins."

Let us therefore, said Nietzsche, resign ourselves to a Godless world. And let us, together with our rejection of God, reject also "the so-called inspiration of the Bible—the gospel of a completely *ignoble* species of man." For the religion of the Bible "denies the value of pride, exuberance, aggressiveness, splendid animalism, the instincts of war and of conquest, the deification of voluptuousness, hatred, anger and revenge." Nietzsche condemns religion, in short, because it teaches the "enervating doctrine" of faith, and hope, and love.

It is one of the interesting by-products of history that the printing of Nietzsche's broadside against religion had to be delayed because his publisher's presses were tied up with an edition of 500,000 hymn books.

Nietzsche condemned religion because it encouraged too much goodness. Mark Twain, on the other hand, rejected it because it condoned too much evil. The world, said Mark Twain, is a mad-house, and life an insane nightmare without any reason or rhyme. "Strange . . . that you should not have suspected that your universe and its content were only dreams, visions, fiction! Strange, because they are so frankly and hysterically insane—like all dreams: a God who could make good children as easily as bad, yet preferred to make bad ones; who could have made every one of them happy, yet never made a single happy one; who made them prize their bitter life, yet stingily cut it short; who gave his angels eternal happiness unearned, yet required his other children to earn it; who gave his angels painless lives, yet cursed his other children with biting miseries and maladies of mind and body; who mouths justice and invented hell—mouths mercy and invented hell—mouths Golden Rules and forgiveness multiplied by seventy times seven, and invented hell; who mouths morals to other people and has none himself; who frowns upon crimes, yet commits them all; who created man without invitation, then tries to shuffle the responsibility for man's acts upon man, instead of honorably placing it where it belongs, upon himself; and finally, with altogether divine obtuseness, invites the poor, abused slave to worship him! . . .

" . . . It is true, that which I have revealed to you; there is no God, no universe, no human race, no earthly life, no heaven, no hell. It is all a dream—a grotesque and foolish dream . . ."

And thus religion seemed to be gradually losing its hold upon the mechanized and disillusioned human mind. The stars, the earth, the rivers, the trees, the life of man, the thoughts of his mind and the aspirations of his heart—all these were relegated into a disconnected jumble of “pullulations” over an “automatic ocean of existence.” An existence without meaning, a world without God. Belief in a divine spirit or in a human soul, wrote Santayana, “is simply belief in magic. The only facts observed . . . are physical facts . . . The soul is only a fine quick organization within the material animal . . . a prodigious network of nerves and tissues.” Santayana therefore rejected “the traditional orthodoxy, the belief, namely, that the universe exists for the sake of man.” And he concluded that, in his opinion, “there is nothing immortal.”

And therefore, argues many an advocate of “free thought,” we are better off without our “deceptive faiths and unfulfilled hopes.” We are living in a cold and dying world—accidental microbes in a decomposing body. There is no one who cares for us or even knows of our existence. Let us be brave enough to accept this fact, and let us wrap ourselves in our heavy cloak of materialism so that we may shiver a little less painfully as we stumble, faithlessly and hopelessly but unafraid, toward the inevitable darkness of the grave.

“And religion is dead, and the churches are empty, and everybody drifts along his own uncharted course.” In France, less than six percent of the Catholic population, said Taine (1890), went regularly to confession. In England, only twenty-five percent of the populace were said to be familiar with “the inside of a church.” In all the other countries of Europe, and in America, too, there was a similar decline in organized religious attendance. In a book of great bitterness, *Why I Quit Going to Church*, Rupert Hughes declares that as a “man of common sense” he can no longer subscribe to the biblical picture of God as “sitting on the cherubim and listening to the everlasting praises of himself” while his ministers are dispensing heaven and hell according to their personal likes or dislikes. “I am constantly horrified,” writes Hughes, “by the extreme unfairness of Christians toward men of other religions . . . Tears filled my eyes for the anguishes of harmless old men burned (by the Inquisitors) at the stake, and of harmless old women stripped and whipped (by the Puritans) and driven through the snow of village

after village with their blood freezing on their half-flayed backs." Although "there are good, brave, glorious clergymen, and almost all of them are sincere," yet "most of them are prisoners on the treadmill of their own set creeds and rituals."

Rupert Hughes, like many another apostate from religion, is opposed not to the *teaching* of Christianity but to the *misteaching* of it. "As for those who protest that I am robbing people of the great comfort and consolation they gain from (your preaching), I can only say that it includes hell, eternal torture for the vast majority of humanity."

Hell for the majority, and a vague promise of heaven hereafter for those who submit to injustice and oppression and hunger on earth. Following the doctrine of Karl Marx that "belief in God is the weapon of the strong for the exploitation of the weak," the Turkish Republic rejected the worship of Mohammed and the Russian Republic abolished the worship of Christ.

### *The Rebirth of Religion*

Yet they did not abolish religion—the ineradicable spirit of communion between man and man. We cannot get along without our prophets and our God. The Russians removed the image of Jesus from their shrines and replaced it with the image of Lenin. To this day there are Russian peasants and workers who cross themselves before the statue of their Communist Saint.

And thus we find the seed of belief in the heart of almost every disbeliever. When he departed from his church, said Rupert Hughes, he did not depart from his faith—his trust in "the ingrained instincts of goodness, bravery, love, and loyalty that influence all mankind and many of the animals." When Voltaire and Karl Marx and Mark Twain quarreled with our temporary conception of God, they had no quarrel with the divine spirit of the universe "apprehended," as Spinoza observed, "under the perspective of eternity." Even the noted leader of agnosticism, Robert Ingersoll, had this to say of worship: "To do justice; to defend the right, to be strength for the weak—a shield for the defenceless; to raise the fallen; to keep the peace between neighbors and nations: this is worship." And speaking of Jesus, he said: "For the reformer who

loved his fellowmen, for the man who believed in an infinite father, who would shield the innocent and protect the just . . . for that great and suffering man . . . I have the highest admiration and respect."

And finally Santayana, though he called himself an "exile from the spirit's realm," disagreed nevertheless with the so-called "enlightenment common to young wits and worm-eaten old satirists, who plume themselves on detecting the scientific ineptitude of religion . . . but leave unexplored the habits of thought from which those tenets sprang, their original meaning and their true function." What really matters, said Santayana, is the fact that everywhere, in spite of our temporary aberrations, we have a divine instinct to find a reason and a plan for our earthly life. The recognition of this fact would "bring the skeptic face to face with the mystery and pathos of mortal existence." It would "make him understand why religion is so profoundly moving and . . . so profoundly just."

The objection of the skeptics, therefore, is to the "traditional orthodoxy" but not to the eternal verity of the religious instinct in man. Skepticism represents the growing pains of the expanding human intellect. It is a healthy sign in the adolescence of the individual, and in the progressiveness of the race, that we demand to examine all things under the searchlight of reason, to question and to analyze, to verify and to doubt. Havelock Ellis, who as a young man had experienced this soul-searching transition from "religiosity to skepticism and from skepticism to religion," regarded this as the most important phase of his entire education: "The man who has never wrestled with his early faith, the faith that he was brought up with and that yet is not truly his own—for no faith is our own that we have not arduously won—has missed not only a moral but an intellectual discipline."

And this is the moral and intellectual discipline that has preoccupied the western world for almost two centuries. The mind of man has been coming of age. And now it is ready for a new interpretation of its faith.

For faith it *will* have. Belief is inherent in life. It is the *binding force* that humanizes life and coördinates it and makes it tolerable and sweet. And religion grows with the growth of our understanding. As our concept of the universe expands, so does our concept of



the universal God. We are, said Dr. Charles William Eliot, on the threshold of a new religion. "It will be an all-saints religion"—that is, it will aim at developing the inherent saintliness of all men everywhere. "It will treasure up all tales of human excellence and virtue. It will respect and honor all strong and lovely human beings—seeing in them in infinite measure qualities similar to those which they adore in God."

This new religion—or, to be more exact, this *renewal* of religion—will not set itself up against any of the other religions. On the contrary, it will select all that is noblest and purest and sublimest in every one of them. It will be the faith of all faiths, the hope of all hopes, the love that embraces all mankind. It will build a loftier conception of God on "the Jewish Jehovah, the Christian Universal Father, the modern physicist's omnipresent and exhaustless energy, and the biological conception of a vital force . . . And it will accept literally and implicitly Saint Paul's statement, 'In Him we live, and move, and have our being.'"

In this new religion there is to be no asceticism, no hell, no hatred, no intolerance, and no gloom. For it is to be a religion of good will and good cheer—"healthful, beneficent, dealing with joy and life," and concerned "not with the welfare of the individual but with service to others, the common good."

The common good under a comprehensive God—the principle of evolution, the vitality of creation, the wellspring of life, the revelation of a design in harmony with beauty, the promise of a destiny in consonance with hope.

### *One Religion for All*

The objection has often been raised that the religious life is a beautiful thing for holiday meditation but an impossible thing for everyday practice. Nothing can be farther from the truth. We are all of us, believers and atheists alike, practicing religion all the time. For religion, in the words of the agnostic, Thomas Huxley, is "a slow and painful ascension, with many a fall, toward better things." Toward the summit of a wider horizon, of a greater understanding, of a more inclusive sympathy. "Daily, with souls that cringe and plot, we Sinais climb and know it not."

Religion, in other words, is the continual adjustment of ourselves to the world. Every human creature, by the very fact of his human existence, is pliable to this adjustment—in a lesser or greater degree. We are constantly taming our savagery that we may live more congenially together. The ideals of religion are the principles of life. These ideals are not unattainable. On the contrary, they are the only *practical* instruments, as discovered by the moral scientists, for the preservation of the individual and of the race. The wages of sin—of disharmony with the spiritual organization of the world—is death. The reward of righteousness—of the right adaptation between the parts and the pattern—is life.

And the urge to this adaptation is not to be found exclusively in any isolated creed. All mankind forms one body, one church. And every one of us is a life-long—perhaps eternity-long—member of this church. It is our instinctive human endeavor to enroll ourselves in the historic world-congregation of the great and the good. The human mind may isolate itself in a separate formula or catechism or faith. But there is no such isolation for the human soul. The soul is non-sectarian. It has no fences of exclusive prayer, or superior ritual, or local pride. No pure soul has ever excommunicated another soul from the fellowship of mankind. The great prophets of the world have visited the earth “not to join a sect, but to do good to all.”

There is a Persian legend that the Lord sent an angel down to earth in order to discover whether it contained a single devout soul—“a soul whose prayer was a prayer for all.” The angel traveled all over the world—among the Zoroastrians, the Hindus, the Buddhists, the Confucians, the Christians, the Mohammedans and the Jews—and he found nowhere the object of his search, a man of utterly disinterested devotion. “There is great nobility in all these faiths. And there are many who honor their faith with their lips. But there is no one anywhere who has enshrined it in his heart.”

And then, as the angel was returning to heaven, he came across a savage praying to a wooden idol “on an island in the distant seas.” And he looked into the heart of the savage, “and he saw therein a compassionate image of the human race.”

And the angel came to the Lord and said: “I have discovered one devout man on earth. But this man is a savage.”

"Then the earth shall be redeemed," said the Lord. "For there lives upon it one civilized man."

### *The Modern Trend of Religion*

President Eliot of Harvard was not the only man who looked for a rejuvenation of the religious spirit. This problem has occupied many a poet and preacher and philosopher and scientist and layman for the past two centuries. While some men were trying to demolish the old faiths, others were endeavoring to establish the new. The builders of religion follow close upon the footsteps of the destroyers. Men like Kant and Emerson and Bergson, Channing and Parker and Newman and Dole, Whitman and Browning and Tennyson and Tolstoy, James and Lodge and Eddington and Einstein and Pasteur—winners of Nobel Prizes, some of them, and all of them discoverers and leaders of thought—have declared the necessity of a church that transcends all churches, and of a religion that includes all creeds. "This religion," wrote Theodore Parker almost a hundred years ago, "must be full of the brave, manly spirit of the day, keeping also the good of times past." Great truths and great needs—moral, political, economic and social—have come to light. These truths and these needs must be placed within the focus of our spiritual vision. "A faith that believes only in *past inspiration*," continued Parker, "will be antiquarian in its habits." It will be musty and dusty and dead. But "a faith that believes in *inspiration now*, will try things by reason and conscience and . . . will lead public opinion, not follow it."

More recently, this idea has been emphasized in one of the inspiring books of the twentieth century—Charles F. Dole's *A Religion for the New Day*. A man's real religion, writes Mr. Dole, "is not sectarian, but humanitarian." It consists simply in "being good and doing good."

This renewed faith as a "working force" for a humane and democratic world is, in brief outline, somewhat as follows:

*Religion and War*

Religion is concerned with a living world. It must have no traffic with the destruction of life. It cannot afford to be "at peace with war." There can be no religious sanction for murder. *Thou shalt not kill!* This commandment must be made as binding upon nations as it now is upon individuals. Whenever a nation, under whatever pretext, sets out upon a career of oppression, of imperialistic expansion or of economic conquest, the voice of religion must be raised courageously and unequivocally against it. Let us not sell the human soul for a ton of iron or a gallon of oil. Peace is a matter not of politics, but of religion. Indeed, all politics should rest upon a foundation of religion—the binding spirit of individuals into a united nation, of nations into a united world. What we need is a world religion that will have the courage to put its definite veto upon war.

"For war is only an external thing, the symptom of a disease deeper down at the heart of society"—the disease of unsociability, of "divisive castes," of competitive blindness, of unfriendly greed. The religion of mankind must insist upon an educational system, an ethical creed and a legal code that will unfold the human heart and render it hospitable to friendship and warmth and light. We must be taught, in the words of George Eliot, the "unjealous joy in joy not made for us." Our religion of mankind must be such as to provide for the establishment of outward tranquillity through inward peace.

In other words, this is to be a *social* as well as an *individual* religion.

*Religion and Society*

The religion of mankind will be supported by faith rather than by wealth. It will therefore be concerned not with the wishes of the rich but with the will of God. A church founded upon class distinction, or race prejudice, or economic precedence, or regional hate, is a house erected upon a foundation of sand. "The walls stand, but the substructure is being undermined."

The architecture of our spiritual temple must be more than a "re-

spectable survival of an earlier time." It must be modeled after the blueprint of our present-day needs. More and more people are beginning to ask themselves: "How useful is my religion to modern society?" Is it alive to the cry of the dispossessed? Is it aggressive against the perpetration of injustice? Is it solicitous for the peace and the joy and the security of all? Is it aware of the political and economic problems of the day? Can it serve us, in short, as a reliable guide in the perplexities of our modern life?

To all these questions, the religion of mankind will answer an emphatic *yes*. It will be in gear with the machinery of the world. It will recognize the function as well as the fact of the evolutionary principle. The soul no less than the body of the species advances toward a higher organism all the time. Religion develops along with the race. It is constantly adapting itself to life—to an abundant life for the entire world. The good things of the world—life, liberty and love—are meant for all, and not for the fortunate few.

For life means the right to a decent livelihood. And liberty means the freedom to enjoy our work. And love means the leisure to cultivate our sympathies and our friendships and our joys. To cultivate them in the peacefulness of a religion that will cement the social consciousness of mankind. Religion dwells in the hearts of all those who are ready to serve. And "no service to man is so material or so low that it may not also be holy."

### *The Test of a True Faith*

How are we to know, it has been asked, whether this religion or that religion is true? And here is the test that has been applied in answer to this question: "Count that religion as true which has always been in all parts of the earth, and on which all men have agreed."

The religion of mankind would come pretty close to meeting this test. For this religion—the spirit and the trend of *all* religion—teaches kindness as a daily practice, a "fixed habit," a moving purpose in the life of man. It teaches adoration—a passionate enthusiasm for beautiful things, exalted thoughts and noble deeds. It teaches reverence—a feeling of breathless wonder at the incessantly unfolding miracle of the world. It teaches companionship—that

bond of compassion which gives us our "capacity for progress, the instinct that has God for a beginning and humanity for an end." It teaches respect for persons. "When we think of religion, we recall persons, the admirable father or mother or neighbor or friend, the glorious procession of the honest or useful, the teachers and helpers of men. We recall the hours when we too were real persons like these." We can best understand God by aspiring to what is best in our fellow men.

And, above all, it teaches a sympathetic understanding of those beliefs that are different from our own. "I can cheerfully use and enjoy the association of all sincere people, called by whatever name." The religion of mankind—the revitalized religion for today—will accept Jesus and Isaiah, Socrates and Saint Paul, Confucius and Francis, Loyola and Luther and Wesley and Mazzini and Mohammed and George Fox—all the great souls who at different times and in different tongues proclaimed the selfsame Gospel of loving-kindness between man and man.

And this Gospel, under whatever form we have received it, is pointed toward a single truth. "There needs to be a body and brotherhood pledged together to accomplish great things for humanity." This pledge to work together, this "larger religion," will not *compete* with the current faiths, but will rather *complete* them. It must "embody itself in some worldwide form of free and generous fellowship"—not for the sectarian few, but for the undivided human race.

### *"The Reality Behind the Veil"*

The realest things in the world, it has been pointed out, are the things unseen. Justice, freedom, honor, duty, friendship, courage, compassion, nobility, devotion, love—these are not abstract ideas but concrete factors in our everyday existence. We know people best not by their appearance but by their personality—the reality of the spirit behind the veil of the flesh. This thing we call *personality*—the divine essence of human existence—has no material measurements. We talk about "the depth" of cruelty, or "the height" of nobility, or "the broadmindedness" of wisdom. But these terms are meaningless. How many fathoms deep is a man's cruelty, how many miles high his nobility, how many horizons wide his wis-

dom? Human personality—the spirit of the world—is infinite. There is no boundary to friendship, no limit to love.

And there is no finality to the adventure of the human soul. No curb to its sacrifice in a just cause. For we see “the spark of the infinite in the cause of truth or freedom.” In our temporary, self-centered blindness we may kill our saviors. But in our unflinching instinct for the infinite, we set up monuments to commemorate their wisdom and our stupidity. For “every one likes to see what the infinite in a man can do”—what all of us have the capacity for doing, if only we had the daring.

The human character, therefore, has not only an estimated valuation but a potential value. Not every man has his price. But every man has his priceless aspiration to something better than what he sees and something finer than what he is. The weight of all the gold in the world will not balance the sacrifice of a life to save another life.

Men sacrifice themselves for others—in peace as in war—because there is an inner voice that speaks to their spiritual intelligence. “Never mind about your immediate little plans. There is a far-reaching eternal plan which is of greater importance.”

And what is this plan? It is beyond our human language to define, yet quite within our human vision to grasp. There is a spiritual as well as a material humanity, a spiritual as well as a material world. The world of the spirit is not measured by beginnings or ends, gallons or inches or days or death: “You never see the death of a man’s spirit . . . The intelligence of a Plato dead? The conscience of a Channing dead? The Christ-life dead?” We are tenants, for a while, of a little corner of the earth. But are we not also tenants, for eternity, of the infinite grandeur of the universe? The so-called order of nature, the material world, said William James, “is only one portion of the total universe.” For “there stretches beyond this visible world an unseen world of which we know nothing positive . . . but in which the riddles of the natural order may be found explained . . . For my own part, I do not know what the sweat and blood and tragedy of this life mean, if they mean anything short of this”—the wrestling within us between the man and the angel, the progressive adaptation of our character to the spiritual reality of life.

And every generation has its spiritual teachers, its Christ-men—comrades and prompters and helpers of us all in the heart-breaking yet soul-strengthening fight to develop our human personality to the full.

### *The Evolution of the Soul*

We go through several stages of development in our struggle to grow into men. Our spiritual, like our physical life, is a process of exfoliation—from the seed to the blade, from the blade to the stalk, from the stalk to the leaves, from the leaves to the flowers. And from the flowers, perhaps, to a more abundant growth in the invisible world.

Thus every stage is the outgrowth of a potentiality in the stage below. It is a sobering thought that every man is at bottom an animal. But it is an ennobling thought that the animal within us strives to become man. At birth the child shows the inclinations of the beast. The seed of spirituality is there, but it has not as yet taken root.

Before long, however, the child learns to smile and to talk, to stand upright and to accept blame for his misdeeds. The tendrils of his soul are beginning to reach outward to the world, and to absorb light and air and warmth for his spiritual growth. He feels, hazily at first but more and more distinctly as time goes on, that he is the member of a team in the interesting game of life. He has become aware of his social obligations as well as of his individual wants. The binding spirit of life, the religious instinct of his personality, has begun to unfold. This instinct, this groping toward relationship with the world, is vague and elusive if we try to analyze it or to define it in scientific terms. *But it is there*—the initial glimpse of the reality behind the veil.

And then comes a gradual education in the "knowledge of good and evil." A period of painful trial and error. How far can he indulge himself without hurting others? How far can he hurt others without injuring himself? Just how important is his little personality in the immediate surroundings of his family? In the larger surroundings of the school and the playground? A tingling adventure, this world of his expanding spirit as he stands looking out upon it from the threshold of his home. Yet he plunges into it un-



afraid. For he knows instinctively that he is Godward bound. Ready to play the little savage in his effort to "fight his way through," he is equally ready to respond with gentleness to a tender word or a loving caress. What he respects above all is a "firm and friendly hand" to show him the way.

For he is advancing toward self-guidance all the time. Every soul has within it the potentiality of its final growth. The adolescent spirit is moved by an instinct for social coöperation. "God helping me, I want to live a clean life. I want to tell the truth. I want to be accommodating and companionable and kind." There are, to be sure, sick souls—like sick bodies or sick plants. Such souls need to be healed, with understanding, sympathy, and love. With a restraining hand, if necessary, but never with a scourge. As Plato observed long ago, you cannot whip a frightened horse into a gentle trot.

The majority of the adolescent personalities, however, have a tendency to healthy growth. They like to find their own paths and to build their own roads. "The soul of man," wrote the English poet, Edward Young, "was made to walk the skies." There is a purpose in life, a journey to be undertaken, an obligation to be met. "I am here to do something, and I had better find out what it is."

And thus begins the next expansion of the soul—the further unfolding of the spiritual life. The soul, enriched by its adolescent experience, is no longer content merely to be good. It feels impelled, in the words of Professor George H. Palmer, "to be good for something." *For social activity.* The individual personality tries to find its place in the social organism of mankind. The body hungers for food and comfort; the mind, for power and success. But the soul demands the warmth of friendship, the sweetness of sociability, the communion of love. In other words, the service of God.

Youth is the eternal springtime of religion. And religion is the eternal promise of youth.

### *The Practical Aim of Religion*

To be religious, to be good for something and to bring out the good in everything, is to remain perennially young. This is the purpose of the modern trend in religion. The religious life is to be a

life of active devotion between all the members in the congregation of the world. The spirit of man seeks a continual outlet in noble activity. And it is the business of religion to keep this outlet fresh and flowing all the time. It must never become choked under the brushwood of stagnated dogmas and antiquated creeds. Our instinctive human desire for social communion must be given free play in all our public and personal contacts.

For every human contact is a meeting of souls as well as of bodies. Life is a procedure toward "infinite companionship." Let us learn to make our meetings friendly rather than hostile. We have nothing to gain from the outwitting or the killing of our fellows. History has yet to show a single theft or injustice or murder that has paid off in the end.

But on the other hand, every noble act is repaid in kind. "Let the breath out, and the air rushes in." Breathe out goodness, and contentment flows into the heart.

And thus the revitalized religion of today insists upon universal integrity—the integration of the individual spirit into the social life. "The individual and society," writes the French philosopher, Auguste Sabatier, "are the object one of the other. Their apparently contradictory rights are, in reality, mutual duties." Man and humanity are an interrelated unit. Neither can work independently of the other. "The society which, to maintain itself, oppresses individual souls and sacrifices their rights and their culture to its own tranquillity is like a mother who would devour her children. The individual who by his own selfishness exploits or destroys the social bond is the perverse or heedless child who, to warm himself, sets fire to the house of his fathers."

What, then, is the soul of man? Good Will. And the soul of society? *Coöperative* Good Will. And the soul of the universe? *Infinite* Good Will. And the practical purpose of religion? To *will* and to *live* the good life—the life of friendly, sympathetic, social usefulness. You are a part of the living universe. So is your neighbor, whatever his language or his creed, or the color of his skin or the shape of his nose. Ask yourself what have been the red-letter days of your career. The days on which you have pushed yourself? or crushed a competitor? or vented your hatred or intolerance or contempt? No. Our "royal days" are those on which we give freely

of our good will. The days on which we open ourselves to the ecstasy of comradeship. For then we touch heaven with our fingertips. It is then that we experience religion at work.

The universal religion of mankind. "God is not shut up in a single denomination." And the soul is not at liberty in a narrow creed.

### *Religion as a Social Force*

It is useless to talk of religion as if all men were equally ready to embrace it. On the other hand, it is erroneous to draw a sharp line between the religious and the non-religious, the just and the unjust, the kind and the cruel, the godly and the devilish, the good and the bad. We cannot subdivide humanity as easily as all that. It is our common human failing to think that "we and ours are superior to you and yours." All his good traits, said a mother speaking of her little boy, come from my side of the family; all his bad traits, from his father's side. "*Our* party is the *right* party; *your* party is the *wrong* party." And both sides are passionately convinced that they can prove their point.

Yet the simple truth of the matter is that every group, every family, every individual is a mixture of the good and the bad. When we are about to meet some one we know, even some one we love, we are not at all sure as to which of his selves will confront us. His smiling and helpful self, or his complaining and disobliging self?

Every one of us, in other words, lives at times *above* and at times *below* "himself"—that is, either up to his social capabilities or down to his individual limitations. For want of a better expression, we say that he follows either the hunger of his soul or the appetite of his body. Within every human personality, "God and the Devil are continually at strife."

And this applies also to the social personality of the group, the nation, the race. In the evolution of our social spirit we are now, perhaps, at the adolescent stage. We are just acquiring the rudimentary knowledge of good and evil. We are going through our period of trial and error. We stumble along through stupidities and misunderstandings and injustices and wars in our effort to arrive at the point of intelligent self-guidance. Our growing social consciousness is nourished by the certain intuition that the world is

not only good, but good for something. *Good for us*, if only we can learn to coöperate with it.

And we are learning as we grow up. "The childhood of the race lies behind us: our manhood lies before us." And the spirit of full-grown manhood is the plenitude of a social faith. Our collective tendency is to rise above ourselves—to grow upward into the free air of a united spirituality. We are coming more and more closely to the idea of the group will, the group mind, the group soul. The World-Soul. The business of religion today is to make men world-minded. In 1849, Victor Hugo spoke words which we need especially to take to heart at the present time: "A day will come when . . . two immense groups, the United States of America and the United States of Europe, shall be seen placed in presence of each other, extending the hand of friendship across the ocean, exchanging their produce, their commerce, their industry, their arts, their genius, clearing the earth, peopling the deserts, improving creation under the eye of the Creator, and uniting, for the good of all, these two irresistible and infinite powers—the fraternity of men and the goodness of God."

### *The Problem of Evil*

"How can you believe in the goodness of God when there is so much evil in the world?" This question becomes all the more insistent as the human soul grows more intelligent and more sympathetic. How can a merciful God allow injustice and suffering and pain?

One answer to the question, accepted in some circles at the present time, is that God is infinite in mercy but limited in power. He develops along with us, is victorious in our victories, rejoices in our joys, and fails in our failures. He needs *our* help, just as we need *His* help. This life, believes William James, is "a real fight, in which something is eternally gained for the universe by success." And God, in this "half-wild and half-saved" universe, "may draw vital strength and increase of very being" from our courage and our fidelity in the fight.

But this conception of God fails to satisfy the human search for the absolute. We hunger for a "reality beyond the shadow"—a heaven which is perfect in beauty, infinite in beneficence, and irre-

sistible in power. We can neither worship nor trust, nor even respect, a divinity which blunders and fears and fumbles along with the rest of us. How can we hope to find the way when our guide himself is unsure of it?

If, therefore, we accept God, we must accept Him as All-Wise, All-Powerful and All-Good. How, then, can we reconcile the existence of evil with the existence of God?

But before we can consider this question, we must ask another question: What *is* evil? Is it a person? A spirit? A thing? The answer is, that evil is none of these. Nothing in itself is evil. There is no malicious intent in a thunderbolt or an earthquake or a storm. They may kill people who get in their way—and thus they may be said to be evil in relation to such people.

Evil, then, is nothing extraneous. It is neither a separate entity nor a permanent fact. "Evil," writes the English psychologist, J. Arthur Hadfield, "is the discarded good of yesterday." In a man of forty, pugnacity is an evil; in a boy of twelve, it was an impulse to growth. In modern society, slavery is a disease; in primitive society, it was a sanitary prescription against an earlier disease. The savages had killed their prisoners captured in war. The barbarians enslaved them but allowed them to live.

What we regard as evil, therefore, is a temporary event that may bring us pain or discomfort or death. It has no absolute meaning. It is relative to the person or persons whom it affects. We say that an incident is evil—a toothache, for example, or a snake-bite, or a broken limb—because we are creatures exposed to suffering through our sensitive nerves and vulnerable flesh.

But why are we possessed of sensitive nerves and vulnerable flesh? Is not this in itself the greatest evil of all? Evil may be nothing but an accidental contact between an impersonal force and a personal victim. But why is the world so constructed that we are forever thrown into the way of such contacts? Why, in short, is there so much suffering in the world?

Because the evolution of the human personality is impossible in any other kind of world. Try to imagine life in a world without the element of what we regard as evil—a world in which there would be no suffering or hunger, no failure or disappointment or sorrow, no injustice or oppression or hatred, no sickness and no

death. But in such a world also there would be no spiritual adventure, no soul-wrestling, no heroism and no victory. The zest of living, the very meaning of life, is in the fighting against obstacles. Where, in a world without evil, would there be room for compassion, mercy, helpfulness, courage, hope, integrity, love? Where should we find, in such a world, the inspiration of Shakespeare, the inventiveness of Edison, the tenderness of Isaiah, the rapture of Beethoven? "Sorrow personified, to whom the world refused joy," said Romain Rolland of Beethoven, "created joy himself to give to the world. He forged it from his own misery, as he proudly said in reviewing his life. And indeed it was the motto of his entire courageous life: *Joy through suffering.*"

All human art, all human achievement, *all human progress*, is a journey from sorrow, through heroism, to joy. Happiness would be inconceivable without pain. Indeed, happiness consists in the overcoming, and in the helping of others to overcome, pain. Human fellowship is the product of human hardship. What is friendship if not a fellow-feeling for another's problems? And what is love if not a dedication to shield a companion from grief?

Evil, then, is a hurdle for the exercise of the muscles of the soul. Good is not the *absence* of evil. It is the active and incessant *advancement against* evil. A world without evil would be a world without prophets or martyrs or saints. It took the treachery of Judas and the hatred of Pilate to reveal the lovingkindness of Christ.

The entire history of human education is a progressive effort to right the world's wrongs. The curriculum in our school of life is such as to produce men.

But what about those who suffer innocently, who are too feeble to fight against their suffering and who—so far as we can see—derive no profit from their pain? What about the workers who are underpaid, the soldiers who are conscripted to be killed, the humble who are cheated out of their rights, the little ones who die before they have had a chance to live? All these questions may be resolved into a single question: What is the good of life?

To this question there is but a single honest answer. *We do not know.* Within the focus of our hope, every so-called evil, every contact with suffering, is an exercise of the soul. Many a sorrow, even within the short span of our existence on earth, turns out to

be a blessing in disguise. Again and again, the loss of a man's fortune may be the gain of a man's freedom. Every physical blow is an instruction in spiritual defense. Now and then, as in the career of the late Franklin D. Roosevelt, "the veil is lifted for a moment" to show us that sickness may not only cripple the body but broaden the mind. "Today the dark I see, but the best is yet to be." Frustration, as Felix Adler has observed, is the necessary spur to fruition.

Yes, for those whose sufferings bear fruit in a richer spirituality. But the primary question still remains unanswered: What is the good of suffering where there is no visible enrichment for the sufferer? How is the dying infant benefited by his painful glimpse of the earth?

To this riddle there is no *scientific* solution. Yet everything points to the logic of a *spiritual* solution. The symmetry of the cosmic pattern, the hunger of the human heart for fulfilment, our esthetic intuition, religious inspiration and moral sense—all these are pretty definite indications that evil is temporary and good is final. The so-called death of a personality is not the end of its development. This is the only attitude which makes any sense out of life. Otherwise our ideas of progress, of beauty, of justice, of courage, of helpfulness, of loyalty, of hope—these, and the visions of all things that are good and noble and sweet—are but the meaningless delusions of a useless and insane world. There can be no warrant for a life that flickers for a moment in a helpless child and then is suddenly and painfully blotted out. It is our instinctive faith in the progress of our lives—*all our lives*—toward something personally good that keeps us from going mad.

And therefore our business in life, individually and socially alike, is to overcome evil with good. "I am like a messenger to light the way; my good will is my torch. My arrogance, my vexation, my one-sided sympathy, my harsh judgment pass off; my life purpose to do my part for the common good emerges."

### *The Modern Idea of God*

What do we mean nowadays when we use the term *God*? We mean the symbol—or, if you will, the fact—of the infinite ocean of

life. God is the Power, the Mind, the Purpose, the Spirit, the Goodness, the Integrating Vitality that creates and sustains and directs all existence. He is the Total Personality of the world. He is "the reality behind the form"—the Energy, as our modern scientists have shown, of a living world. God is the Principle of Growth, of Progressive Evolution, of the creative interaction between the environment and the individual, of the unfolding of the seed into the forest and of the amoeba into the vision of a Shakespeare and the compassion of a Tolstoy.

"God is a Being, a Spirit, a Personality, a Will." Just as the individual life is a drop out of the ocean of infinite life, just so is the individual personality a particle of the infinite personality of God. And this is no mere figure of speech. "Person in man cannot be, without the surplusage of person out of which man is born or evolved." Like can beget only like. When we hear the *Ninth Symphony*, or look at the *Last Supper*, or read *Leaves of Grass*, we know what God is. God is the essence of genius, order, unity, comradeship, creativity, love. Where there is beauty, reverence, devotion, there is God.

It is in this sense that man is made in the image of God. The human mind is modeled after the pattern of the Universal Mind. It hungers after order, purpose, unity, meaning, life, because these are the attributes of the Total Personality of the world. And it is in this sense, too, that all men are the children of God. Life is a coöperative enterprise for the willing and understanding members of one family. We are gradually learning to subordinate our individual desires to the service of a united social progress. And we are doing this, in a literal sense, under the guidance of God. For God, in the words of Professor Whitehead, "is the binding element in the world."

This is the conception of God that satisfies the heart and appeals to the mind. "I find letters from God dropped in the street," writes Walt Whitman, "and every one is signed by God's name." Every moment of every day carries a prompting from God to man. "The aspect of deity which reason discovers," writes Professor William E. Hocking, "is an unconditional, inevitable, universal presence."

And, adds Professor Irwin Edman, "all that is needed (for the daily communion of man with God) is wit and intelligence and



disinterestedness . . . the sense of participation in a comprehensive human enterprise." This "sense of participation in an enterprise, infinite and very human, is all the religion that one needs in our generation." This, and "the intuition of immortal things."

There can be no sound religion without the hope of immortality.

### *"There Are No Dead"*

The hope of immortality is perennial and universal. "Mortal though I be," wrote the ancient astronomer, Ptolemy, "I gaze up to the night's starry domain of heaven . . . and my lively spirit drinketh immortality." And the same idea, from a different angle, is expressed in the words of the modern physicist, John Tyndall: "Our study of science reveals immutability in the midst of change . . . The law of conservation rigidly excludes both creation and annihilation."

There is no absolute proof of immortality. But, on the other hand, there is no absolute proof of mortality. The best things in life, the dearest goals of our ambitions, are uncertainties of the future rather than certainties within the grasp of our present understanding. What would be the fun of living and hoping if everything were assured?

Immortality is not an assurance, but a hope. Yet it is a hope which "rings true." It has the "feel" of a legitimate coin. There seems to be nothing counterfeit about it. Those of us who have known bereavement can testify to this. Death is not the terrible thing as imagined by those who have never faced it. The body of my beloved is dissolved; but the personality of my beloved, that which endeared him to me, is as solid as ever. "It has no weight now," you say, "no measure, no features, no face." Did it have any weight or measure while it was in your presence? Did the beauty of the personality depend upon the imperfections of the body, the moles upon the face, the clumsiness of the gait? Again and again we come across people with ugly bodies but "beautiful souls." Just what do we mean by the expression, *beautiful soul*? Call the soul whatever you like, but there it is. The hard thing to imagine about it is not the *continuation* but the *cessation* of its life. "I find no particle of evidence," writes Charles F. Dole, "that death can touch

me." The soul, the person, the identity, the living spirit called *me*. Is my transition into *another* world too great a miracle for the current of life? It is no greater miracle than my birth into *this* world.

Familiarity breeds contempt. We forget the wonder of life because it is ours from day to day. And yet we have the innate feeling, from our very infancy, that we are the co-partners of some great enterprise. We are engaged in the commerce of a life-force that has no letting down of shutters or closing of books. Is there anything in the world more solid than this universal conviction? The only reality in this world is life. Everything else is but its shadow. This is the intuition upon which we base all our activities and all our thoughts. We act, not on the assumption that tomorrow we may die, but that tomorrow, *and the day after tomorrow*, we shall go on living. In all our hopes and in all our plans, whether in youth or in old age, we face not *deathward* but *lifeward*. Instinctively we accept immortality as a fact.

All this, to be sure, is not a proof but an intimation. But it is an intimation which is overwhelming in its persuasiveness. We now know that matter cannot be dissolved into nothingness. What right have we to assume that *energy* can be dissolved into nothingness? The *material particles* of the body, as a result of the process which we call death, are reorganized into other concrete forms of existence. Why should the *spiritual life* of the body, the personality, the character, the soul, be dissipated into the void? Death is a regrouping of the physical elements into the harmonious unity of the dimensional world. Is it not also a "re-grouping" of the spiritual elements into the harmonious unity of the non-dimensional "ocean of life"? Remember that even in our earthly life the personality has no measurements of length or width or height or beginning or end.

Moreover, our hope for immortality is based upon our sense of the fitness of things. The stars and the planets seem to fit. They make an intelligible pattern. But life and death do not seem to fit. There is no pattern of continuity that binds them together. Man spins a thread of toil and desire, of hope and ambition and faith, of promise and failure and promise again in spite of defeat—and then the thread is snapped off. There is no reason or rhyme to this. It doesn't make sense. There is no sense to the inspiration of the poet, the vision of the scientist, and the sacrifice of the saint. No

sense, that is, unless death is the extension of the thread into the pattern of a more abundant life.

Another factor that points toward immortality is our instinctive human hunger for service. We want to be useful, to do something worth while, to tackle our job of living and to go on with it, and ever on. "How can I die, when there is still so much for me to do?" We have a feeling that we owe a debt to the universe for its bounty, and that we can never repay this debt within the narrow span of a lifetime. And we also have the feeling that we shall not be caught delinquent in the payment of this debt. This sense of duty and honesty and ability must be something more than a mere deception. We should be ashamed of a universe that would lead us on with a false hope to fulfil an imaginary obligation for a worthless gift.

But, you will ask, do we not partially repay our obligation by transmitting it to our children? Is not this the meaning of life—to make it more livable for the generations to come? But to what end? That they, too, may die with their jobs and their promises unfulfilled? And that the entire world may finally die with *its* job and *its* promise unfulfilled? This attitude toward immortality will help us to solve neither the mystery of death nor the meaning of life. Old age, without the hope for the renewal of youth, would be a period of tragedy and despair. It would be no satisfaction to say, "I have done my best, and now I am ready to quit." How much more comforting it is to think, with Shelley, "If winter comes, can spring be far behind?"

More comforting, because we feel instinctively that it is more true. We feel, in our sense for the fitness of things, that if we care for God, God cares for us; that the universe has not gone through its millions of centuries of evolution in order that a man and his mind and his life may pass merely as a vapor over the surface of the earth. Our mind is not satisfied with this superficial aspect of the world. Our thinking has within it something more solid than vapor. It has the sense of an infinite possibility of achievement—a possibility in the presence of which even the poems of Shakespeare and the paintings of Leonardo are but imperfect expressions, the works of apprentices who are just beginning to learn. The greatest men of genius have declared that their realizations have fallen far

short of their conceptions. Death always comes in the midst of preparation to do something great.

What is true of genius is true, in a lesser degree, of us all. Every one of us feels that the world has "let him down"—that he hasn't had "his chance" in life, that what he has been *allowed* to do is but the merest fraction of what he is *able* to do. "Shall we now think that all this stops at the gate of death?" Shall all prophecies and promises be obliterated in the impotent finality of the grave? Are we all to die in the process of our apprenticeship? Apprenticeship for what? Our minds *demand* an answer to this question, and our hearts *supply* this answer. In this life we are apprentices at the art of living, that we may become masters later on.

Here we have the only logical answer to that "strange but vital quality" called hope. The spirituality of hope flows into various moral channels—passion for justice, that the fitness of things may be preserved; courage for endurance, that the soul may be strengthened in its growth; eagerness for learning, that we may become more familiar with the trend and the nature of our destiny; tenacity for friendship, that we may strive and live and march to our destiny together.

But the most heartening aspect of hope is its limitless capacity. "It cries out for the sight of the stars, and for stars beyond stars." No human hope has yet been realized on earth. "Give it earth, and it seeks for heaven too." Hope at its worst is toward infinite life for itself; at its best, toward infinite life for all. Unfailingly it keeps reaching out to something higher, something wider, more permanent, more precious, more in keeping with the multitudinous pledges of the heavens and the earth, than we can ever expect in this ephemeral world of ours. A finite life cannot be an answer to an infinite hope.

Do you still doubt the signposts of hope that point toward a deathless world? Consider the lives of the great men of the earth. Longfellow was wrong when he hinted that the lesson we learn from genius is for this life alone. His very figure of speech shows the error of his thought. Footprints made "on the sands of time" are soon blown or washed away. Many of the great thoughts of the past have been completely lost in the shifting sands of history. The lesson that a great man teaches is not that we can bring a little

more comfort to our sojourn on earth—the hospital for incurables and vestibule to the morgue. No, the lesson is rather that the great man's life—*every* man's life—is but the beginning of a great and immortal adventure. "No corrupt and materialist earth blocks our spiritual growth." If *one* man is worthy of immortality, *every* man is worthy of immortality. In the orderly ranking of nature, there is no isolationism or preference or caste. If a man is evil in this world, he is spiritually sick. He will be cured of his sickness in the end. Life is a hospital into which we are admitted for healing, not for death.

What the final nature of this healing may be, we do not know. Nor would it be good for us to know. One of the greatest experiences in our human existence is the glad astonishment at some unexpected gift. It is the surprising turn in the plot that makes for the grandeur in the Drama of Life. But whatever this surprise will be, we can rest assured, from the majesty of the story thus far, that the climax will be *good*, the imaginable *best*.

The wisest thing for us to do, therefore, is not only to *entertain*, but to *nourish*, the hope of immortality. To *practice* the hope in our daily life. Since we have no proof to the contrary, let us accept the idea as an article of our trust. "I have reason to believe in a future state," wrote Benjamin Franklin, "because I trust in God . . . I say that when I see nothing annihilated, and not even a drop of water wasted, I cannot suspect the annihilation of souls . . . Thus finding myself to exist in the world, I believe that I shall, in some shape or other, always exist; and, with all the inconveniences human life is liable to, I shall not object to a new edition of mine; hoping, however, that the errata of the last may be corrected."

Yet even this, you will justly contend, is insufficient to give us the assurance of a proof. Very well, then, suppose you regard immortality not as a convincing *fact* but as a heartening *perhaps*. What if you try to live *as if* immortality were true. Immediately you feel an expansion of life, an enrichment of personality, a festivity in the company of shipmates embarked upon a joyous cruise. "You who have this hope"—and who live accordingly—"can wrong no man, hate no one, despise no one." For all of you have an equal share in a priceless inheritance. A life of active fulfilment in the presence of God.

This attitude of *perhaps*—this living *as if* the positive answer to death is the continuation of life—opens new vistas, draws upon new powers, and inspires a new dignity in the humblest and a new sympathy in the mightiest. It is the greatest spur to mutual understanding and social action. And it provides the soundest basis for the belief in the equality of men. For it tells us, in effect, not to judge a life by a single chapter. "Wait till you have read the entire book."

And now, on the other hand, suppose yourself living under the positive conviction that all your activities will end in death. Imagine the bread of your intellect to be kneaded without the zestful savor of the word *perhaps*. Your life might still be noble, compassionate, and kind. "Let us help our fellow-victims caught in the meshes of fate." But what a wintry existence, what a meaningless altruism, what a hopeless fight. Your world would then be a death-cell for prisoners condemned without a trial, and without a chance to appeal for commutation or reprieve. Every day would mark but another step to the executioner's block. What a meager foundation of credit upon which to organize the business of life!

But actually, if we look deep down in our hearts, we find there no absolute and hopeless denial, but at worst a doubtful groping in the dark, with an expectant turning toward the dawn. However skeptical we may be in our philosophy, we are trustful in our life. We plan and we build and we create on the assumption that there is an ultimate reason for it all. We will not allow the shackles of pessimism to drag us down on our buoyant journey through the world. "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." For the slaying is but the prompter's direction in the role I have been selected to play. I accept "Life and Love as the Lord of All." For at the end of the voyage I expect not shipwreck but a safe landing in the company of my friends.

It is this living spark of faith that warms the ashes of our doubt. It is this tiny *perhaps* that enables us to greet every day with a full heart. This, and an open mind—a spirit with windows facing squarely and honestly upon every aspect of life, and every shade of thought. We are learning to be faithful and tolerant and free—to bring a clearer vision not only to our own but to our neighbor's beliefs. "A century ago," writes B. S. Streeter, "we were all eyes for

the errors of every religious body but our own; today we are recognizing the truth in one another's positions; but there is one more stage, and that is for each to awaken to the *errors* in his *own* views—and that is the hardest stage of all."

But we are moving in that direction. We are beginning to see that there are not only two sides but many sides to every question, and that it is only in the *composite view* that we may hope to get an image of the truth. Every honest aspiration, every disinterested thought and every giving and forgiving faith is a part of the divine service in the Cathedral of the Universe.

The final word of religion, therefore—the final word of philosophy—is this: *Have faith in life*. Accept the world as the noblest men of the ages have accepted it. Were some of them divine? Their life on earth was human. And they showed us how to live. Remember what Matthew Arnold said in his poem, *The Better Part*:

Was Christ a man like us? *Ah, let us try*  
*If we then, too, can be such men as He!*

## Biographical Notes

AMIEL, HENRI FRÉDÉRIC: (1821-1881). Swiss philosopher, professor at Geneva Academy, and author of the inspirational *Journal Intime*.

ANAXIMANDER: (611-547 B.C.). Greek astronomer, mathematician and philosopher. He invented geographical maps, discovered the obliquity of the ecliptic, contributed to the knowledge of the solstices and the equinoxes, and established one of the earliest philosophical systems in Europe.

ANAXIMENES: (flourished at Miletus, about 550 B.C.). Like Anaximander, he was a scientist as well as a philosopher. Pliny attributed to him the invention of the sundial.

ANTISTHENES: (born in Athens 444 B.C.). Cynic philosopher, and pupil of Socrates. He is said to have aided in bringing some of his teacher's persecutors to justice. Though a cynic in theory, he was an ascetic in practice.

AQUINAS, THOMAS: (1227-1274). Catholic philosopher and theologian. Related by birth to several of the royal families of Europe, he gave up a worldly career for a life of teaching and preaching. In 1263 he refused an offer for the archbishopric of Naples. At his death he was given a number of honorary titles—such as *Angel of the Schools*, *Eagle of Divines*, *Angelic Doctor*, and *Doctor of the Church*. He was canonized in 1323.



ARISTOTLE: (384-322 B.C.). Born in the Thracian city of Stagira, he came to Athens at eighteen and enrolled as a pupil at the Academy of Plato. Though he often criticized Plato's philosophy, he always spoke of his master with the highest respect. After Plato's death, he lived for three years at the court of Hermias, an old classmate at the Academy who was now a king in Asia Minor. He married the king's daughter and, when the king was assassinated, he became the tutor of Alexander at the court of Philip of Macedon. When Alexander set out on his military campaigns, Aristotle went to Athens where he founded his famous school known as the "Peripatetic" (from *peripatein*, to walk up and down, because the teacher walked with his pupils as he lectured to them). Here he taught for twelve years, and then he fled from Athens to escape arrest on the charge of atheism. He died the following year, at Chalcis, in Euboea.

ARNOLD, MATTHEW: (1822-1888). English poet, essayist, and critic. A son of Thomas Arnold, headmaster of Rugby, he was for thirty years inspector of schools in England. For some time he was professor of poetry at Oxford. In 1883, and again in 1886, he gave a series of lectures in the United States. He was in his intellectual prime when he died suddenly, of a heart attack, in Liverpool.

AUGUSTINE, SAINT (Aurelius Augustinus): (354-430). Born of a Pagan father and a Christian mother, he spent his youth in "sowing wild oats." At thirty-two he became converted to the orthodox faith, gave up his worldly goods and devoted himself to "the service of God." He entered the priesthood at Hippo, in North Africa, and subsequently became bishop there. He died at Hippo, while the town was besieged by the Vandals. Owing to the "emotional beauty" of his teaching, the painters of his portrait gave him the symbol of a flaming heart.

BACON, FRANCIS: (1561-1626). He was the youngest of eight children of Sir Nicholas Bacon. Educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, he was elected to Parliament at twenty-three. At thirty he became the friend and protégé of Essex. Ten years later he helped to send Essex to the block on the charge of conspiracy against the crown. In 1603 he was knighted, and three years later he married Alice Barnham, a London alderman's daughter who brought him a large dowry and much unhappiness. He had no children. In 1607 he was appointed Solicitor-General of England—an office which he filled with an unflagging zeal for self-interest. In 1613 he was raised to the attorney-generalship. In 1618 he became Lord Chancellor. Three years later he was sent to the

Tower for taking bribes. Released from the Tower, he retired to private life and to his philosophical studies. In March, 1626, he caught cold while stuffing a chicken with snow in the course of a scientific experiment. Several days later he died of pneumonia.

BALDWIN, JAMES MARK: (1861-1934). Educated in the United States and in Germany, he taught psychology and philosophy at Lake Forest University, Toronto University, Johns Hopkins, Oxford and Harvard. In 1909 he was made president of the International Congress of Psychology at Geneva.

BENTHAM, JEREMY: (1748-1832). He entered Oxford at thirteen, and received his bachelor's degree at fifteen. Trained for the bar, he never practiced his profession but devoted his entire life to philosophy and literature. Yet he never took the trouble to publish his chief works. They were issued only at the instigation of his friend and French translator, Étienne Dumont. "A friend of mankind" throughout his life, he bequeathed his body to be dissected in the interest of science. He is known as the father of utilitarianism—the philosophy which subscribes to "the greatest happiness of the greatest number."

BERGSON, HENRI: (1859-1941). Educated at Paris, he was appointed, in 1903, professor of philosophy at the Collège de France. In 1913 he delivered courses of lectures at Columbia University and at Oxford. In 1940, when the Hitler-inspired French Government ordered all Jewish professors to resign from their positions in the state universities, an exception was made in Bergson's case. But Bergson refused the favor. He retired from the faculty of the Collège de France.

BERKELEY, GEORGE: (1685-1753). He received his degree of A.B. with honors at Trinity College, Dublin, in 1704, and plunged immediately into the "speculative world of metaphysics." His philosophy finds complete expression in the *Principles of Human Knowledge*, published when he was only twenty-five. He lived for three years on a farm in Rhode Island, tried to establish in Bermuda a college for the American Indians, and then returned to Ireland where he was appointed Bishop of Cloyne and spent the rest of his life teaching "the order of nature and the operation of the Divine Mind."

BOSANQUET, BERNARD: (1848-1923). English philosopher. Educated at Harrow and at Balliol College, he devoted his life to speculative philosophy and practical charity. His main philosophical interests were

in logic, esthetics and ethics. The great passion of his life, he said, was to prove the unity of the world—the presence of the divine spirit in the “family of mankind.”

BOSSUET, JACQUES BÉNIGNE: (1627-1704). Born at Dijon, he became a canon at thirteen. An able orator as well as brilliant writer, he made it his business to reconcile the Protestant with the Catholic Church. Passionate, clear and sincere, he succeeded in “flinging his fury into theses.” His most successful sermons were in the form of biographical sketches. Appointed Bishop in Gascony, he resigned to become tutor to the son of Louis XIV. In 1681 he became Bishop of Meaux, and devoted the rest of his life to the ideal of a world “united under the aegis of Christianity.”

BUCKLE, HENRY THOMAS: (1821-1862). English historian. Owing to ill health, he had no formal education. But he was an omnivorous reader and a profound student of life. He could read nineteen languages and converse fluently in seven. An ample inheritance enabled him to devote himself to literature and chess, in both of which he became outstanding. His *History of Civilization in England*—a history based on the principles of philosophy—was left unfinished when he died.

BUDDHA, SIDDHARTHA SAKYAMUNI GAUTAMA: (563-483 B.C.). Brought up as a prince, he left his palace, his wife and his infant child “in search of divine wisdom” at the age of twenty-nine. He found this wisdom, so the legend goes, as he sat meditating under the sacred Bodhi Tree—“the Tree of Enlightenment.” Hence he assumed the name of *Buddha, the Enlightened One*. He spent the rest of his life traveling and preaching and practicing “the Way of Compassion and Peace.”

CARLYLE, THOMAS: (1795-1881). Scottish philosopher. The grandson of a carpenter and the son of a mason, he was trained for the church. But he found himself “unable, because of religious doubts, to enter the ministry.” He spent his life teaching, translating German masterpieces into English, creating English masterpieces of his own, and fighting off the depression of a chronic dyspepsia. Yet in spite of his illness he began his philosophical career with an “Everlasting No” and ended it with an “Everlasting Yea.” And he lived to the age of eighty-six.

CHUANG-TSE: (born 370 B.C.). Chinese sage. For a time he held minor offices in the city of Khi-yuan. But twice he refused higher

office at court because, as he said, "I had rather amuse myself in a ditch than subject myself to the commands of a king." Kings and thieves, he declared, have many qualities in common. He was the first philosophical anarchist in history.

CICERO, MARCUS TULLIUS: (106-43 B.C.). Roman orator, statesman, soldier and philosopher, he spent a stormy life in the forum, on the battlefield and in the public assemblies. Yet he found time to leave behind him the finest prose specimens in Latin literature. A conservative in politics, he was exiled for one year at the accession of the democrats to power, and was killed fifteen years later in the political turmoil following the assassination of Caesar.

CLEANTHES: (Third century B.C.). A disciple of the Stoic philosopher, Zeno, he worked by night in order to attend his master's lectures in the daytime. At Zeno's death, Cleanthes was appointed as his successor. His most famous extant work is the *Hymn to Zeus*—a poem that is almost Christian in its conception.

COMTE, ISIDORE AUGUSTE MARIE FRANÇOIS XAVIER: (1798-1857). Born of a French Catholic family, he underwent a "spiritual revolution" at fourteen. He married in 1825, and remained unhappy forever after. He tried suicide the following year, but survived to fall in love with a woman whose husband was serving a life sentence. At her death, he made another unsuccessful attempt to kill himself. In between his fits of passion and despair, he wrote many books on philosophy—including his famous *Religion of Humanity*.

CONDORCET, MARIE JEAN ANTOINE NICOLAS DE CARITAT, MARQUIS DE: (1743-1794). Equally adept in science and in philosophy, this scion of French nobility was an ardent lover of the common man. He supported both the American and the French Revolution. But his opposition to the death of Louis XVI brought about his exile from Paris. He found refuge at the home of Madame Vernet: "The Convention," she said, "may declare you outside of the law, but it cannot declare you outside of humanity." He was finally arrested and imprisoned by the revolutionary extremists. The next day he was found dead.

CONFUCIUS: (551-478 B.C.). Orphaned at three, he married at nineteen and became an "unprofessional" teacher of philosophy four years later. He spent the greater part of his career as a wandering "ambassador of good will," but settled down now and then to an appointment

as teacher in practical statesmanship. His purpose as a teacher, he said, was to inspire his people with practical morality rather than to enrich them with theoretical knowledge.

CROCE, BENEDETTO: (1866— ). Born at Pescasseroli, Italy, he lost both his parents (1883) in an earthquake. He started his intellectual life as an interpreter of Karl Marx. Though actively interested in education, he spent his life writing rather than teaching. Much of his writing—collected in 1926 into twenty volumes—is devoted to the importance of philosophy in the evaluation of history. Every moment and movement of history, he declared, is motivated by a single indivisible Spirit.

DANTE, (OR DURANTE) ALIGHIERI: (1265-1321). Born in Florence of a middle-class family, he dedicated himself to poetry and philosophy from early youth. His "guiding star" in these pursuits was Beatrice, a child he met when both were nine years old. They were never married. But with the woman he did marry, Gemma Donati, he had two sons and a daughter. Taking part in the political turmoil of the day, he was sentenced (1302) to be "burned alive" if captured. He escaped from Florence and spent the rest of his life in exile—"a wanderer over the earth, in the regions below and in the heavens above."

DEMOCRITUS: (born about 470 B.C.). He was probably the greatest of the scientific philosophers in ancient times. Having inherited a considerable fortune, he devoted his life to travel and study. At one time, it is said, he became insane and was cured by Hippocrates. One of the founders of the atomic theory, he wrote no less than seventy-two books on philosophy and physics. He died, according to some historians, at the age of ninety; according to others, at 110.

DESCARTES, RENÉ: (1596-1650). The son of a councillor at Rennes, he lost his mother in his second year. Throughout his life he displayed "great physical delicacy and even greater mental vigor." He did much of his writing in bed. His chief intellectual interests were mathematics, philosophy, and jurisprudence. The idea of his great philosophical system came to him, he said, in a series of dreams. In 1628 he settled in Holland, where he remained until almost the end of his life. In 1649 he went to Sweden where he became the tutor of Queen Christina. The northern climate and the early hours—the queen insisted on taking her lessons at five in the morning—undermined his health. He died the following year.

DEWEY, JOHN: (1859— ). He was born in Burlington, Vt., and was educated at the University of Vermont and at Johns Hopkins. He taught philosophy at the universities of Minnesota, Michigan and Chicago. At Chicago he carried out his ideas on the "new pedagogy"—based upon the principles of practical life under a democratic government. For two years he taught at the University of Peking. In 1904 he joined the department of philosophy at Columbia, and then "his voice was heard in liberal circles throughout the world."

DIOGENES: (412-323 B.C.). A disciple of Antisthenes, he rapidly excelled his master both in his cynical teaching and his ascetic life. Captured by pirates while on a voyage, he asked to be sold as a slave to a man who needed a master. Sold to a Corinthian named Xenias, he became the tutor of his owner's two sons, preached self-control to his pupils and lived in a tub as the "most comfortable of homes for a man of simple tastes."

DOLE, CHARLES FLETCHER (1845-1927). Unitarian clergyman and religious teacher. Born in Brewster, Maine, he served as pastor of various churches in Boston from 1876 until the time of his death. He wrote a number of books on the relationship between philosophy and religion and the everyday problems of the democratic life.

ELLIS, HENRY HAVELOCK: (1859-1939). English man of letters. His grandfather and his father were sea captains. He spent much of his childhood on the Pacific, and a good part of his remaining life exploring "the mysterious ocean of the spirit." Trained as a physician, he abandoned his profession for his literary work. His work, to quote the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, combines "the patience of a Darwin . . . with the literary brilliance of a Huxley."

EMERSON, RALPH WALDO: (1803-1882). He was one of the great philosophers who preached "the simplicity and energy of the Highest Law—the oneness of mankind." He lost his pulpit in Boston because of his "too advanced ideas." And so he decided to take the whole world for his platform—to become "a professor of the Science of Joy" in a new kind of university, the village lyceum, and to a new kind of student, the "immortal common man."

EMPEDOCLES: (490-430 B.C.). He was not only a philosopher but a statesman. Helping to overthrow an oligarchic government at Agrigentum, he refused the invitation of the citizens to become their king.

His contemporaries regarded him as "more than a man;" and even in modern times he has been called "the democrat of antiquity par excellence."

**EPICTETUS:** (born about 60 A.D.). Though a slave as a boy, he managed to attend the lectures of the Stoic philosopher, Musonius Rufus. Later on, he became a freedman. But he was lame and sickly. In 90 he was expelled from Rome by the emperor Domitian, because "the Stoics were opposed to royalty." The rest of his life he spent as "a fugitive on earth but a citizen of heaven."

**EPICURUS:** (342-270 B.C.). Born on the island of Samos, he came to Athens at eighteen, studied philosophy for a time, was exiled by Alexander, returned to Athens and opened a coeducational college for the teaching of "the tranquil happiness of a healthy mind." The college became famous as the *Garden of Epicurus*. His personal life was simple and temperate and serene. And he retained his serenity even in the face of great physical suffering for a number of years before his death.

**FOX, GEORGE:** (1624-1690). The son of a Leicestershire weaver, he started his own career as a cobbler's apprentice. But in his twentieth year he "received the voice of God" to help right the wrongs of the world. From the very first he gained many adherents and suffered great persecution. Again and again he was sent to prison, one of his sentences being a "wedding present" from the king when he married Margaret Fell. When free, he traveled all over England and sailed even to the United States in an effort to spread his Quaker doctrine of friendliness and peace.

**FRANCE, ANATOLE:** (1844-1924). Original name, Jacques Anatole Thibault. Called by Lemaître "the ultimate flower of the French genius," he was the son of a bookseller. He started life as an ardent Catholic, but he grew more radical as he grew older and toward the end of his life espoused the cause of Russian Communism. In his writing, as in his life, he may perhaps be described as a Christian Pagan. Always on the side of liberalism, he threw himself heart and soul into the Dreyfus case. His works, both in poetry and in prose, number almost fifty volumes.

**FRANCIS OF ASSISI, SAINT:** (1182-1226). His real name was Giovanni Bernardone. He started his life as the "gilded and giddy" son of a wealthy merchant. But, during convalescence from a long illness, he "saw the light" and set out to win the world by renouncing it. He de-

veloped into one of the most gentle personalities in all history—supremely lovable because supremely loving. He founded the Franciscan order of the “little brothers of the poor,” and was canonized in 1228.

GOETHE, JOHANN WOLFGANG VON: (1749–1831). The son of a government official in Frankfort-on-the-Main, he showed from the very start the qualities that were to make him the greatest of German poets, one of the greatest of its philosophers, and as fascinating a character as ever lived. At eight he wrote a Latin essay on comparative religion. At eleven he composed a novel in seven languages. At twelve he fought a duel. At fourteen he fell violently in love for the first time. At seventy-four he fell violently in love for the last time. And at eighty-two he completed his greatest philosophical poem, the second part of *Faust*.

HAMMURABI: (2240–2185 B.C.). This King of Babylon, who lived over 4000 years ago, enacted a legal code which shows him to have been a humane legislator and administrator—a man not far behind the most advanced statesmen of today in the social decencies of civilization.

HEGEL, GEORG WILHELM FRIEDRICH: (1770–1831). Born at Stuttgart, he was professor successively at Jena, Heidelberg, and Berlin. He was a far greater thinker than writer. Indeed, his philosophy was expressed in such obscure language that it meant all things to all men. It served as the inspiration for liberals, conservatives, reactionaries and dictators. A leader accepted by all, he is a guide to none.

HERACLITUS: (flourished about 513 B.C.). Born at Ephesus, he traveled extensively but returned to Ephesus to formulate his system of philosophy, and also to write on nature, religion and politics. We have only a handful of fragments from his voluminous writing. He considered the world as a constant mutation, or flux, starting from fire and evolving back into fire.

HERODOTUS: (born 484 B.C.). The Greek “Father of History” was a native of Asia Minor. In the collection of the material for his history, he traveled all over the then-known world. He possessed a “keyhole” talent for looking into the lives and the hearts of people. To this day he is our best authority for the ancient life of Egypt and of other countries in the Near East.



**HOBBS, THOMAS:** (1588-1679). "An intimate of the great," he became secretary to Francis Bacon and, later on, tutor to King Charles II. Conservative in his outlook, he developed a philosophical system based upon "the necessity of the weak to bow to the will of the strong." He was the first English philosopher to write extensively on the science of government.

**HUME, DAVID:** (1711-1776). He entered the University of Edinburgh at twelve and left it at fifteen without a degree. Later he studied at the Jesuit school of La Flèche, in France. He wrote his first great book, *Treatise of Human Nature*, at twenty-eight. He revised this book eight years later, and republished it under a new title—*An Enquiry Concerning the Human Understanding*. For two years (1767-1769) he served as Under-Secretary of State. In philosophy he was an iconoclast. He broke down the old systems and cleared the ground for the new.

**INGERSOLL, ROBERT GREEN:** (1833-1899). Born at Dresden, N.Y., he studied law and was admitted to the bar in 1854. In the Civil War he served as colonel of the Eleventh Illinois Cavalry. In 1866 he was appointed attorney-general of Illinois. Slated for higher honors in the Republican party, he incurred the displeasure of the leaders of that party because of his "free thought" philosophy. He settled in New York City in 1882, where he practiced law and lectured on agnosticism for the rest of his life.

**ISAIAH:** (Born about 785 B.C.). One of the most exalted of Hebrew prophets, he exerted great influence at the court of King Ahaz and of King Hezekiah in Jerusalem. Later, however, he fell into disfavor because of his "too strenuous opposition" to royal injustice and his "too insistent advocacy" of universal peace. Tradition has it that he was sawn asunder at the order of King Manasseh.

**JAMES, WILLIAM:** (1842-1910). Son of the famous mystic and brother of the even more famous novelist, William James outstripped them both in mental capacity. Trained in science, medicine, psychology and philosophy, he taught at Harvard from 1872 to 1907 and wrote some of the most original books ever produced in America on psychological and philosophical subjects. In psychology he is known as the author of the so-called "functional" point of view; and in philosophy he is recognized as the "father of pragmatism"—that is, thinking as an aid to everyday living.

KANT, IMMANUEL: (1724-1804). Grandson of a Scottish immigrant to Königsberg, Kant is recognized as the greatest of German philosophers. He started as a preacher, and ended as a skeptic—with a mystical belief in God that transcended his skepticism. For forty-two years he taught at the University of Königsberg. Though his mind traveled all over the universe, his physical excursions never went beyond forty miles from his native city. And though in theory he was an ardent democrat, he remained in practice a loyal subject to the German king.

KROPOTKIN, PETER ALEXEIVITCH: (1842-1921). The son of a prince, he was raised at court. But he abandoned his "artificial" nobility for the "natural" nobility of a poor and persecuted life as a "friend of the oppressed." He became one of the leaders of philosophical anarchism. After several imprisonments in Russia and in France, he settled in London. Following the Russian Revolution in 1917 he returned to live in Moscow. His philosophical vision was focused upon a coöperative humanity inspired by a passion for "mutual aid."

LAO-TSE: (born about 600 B.C.). His name means "the Old Sage." He was carried in his mother's womb, according to tradition, for sixty-two years, so that he was born "gray-haired and full of wisdom." He was the author of *Tao*—the "rhythmic way" of the universe and of human life.

LEIBNIZ, GOTTFRIED WILHELM: (1646-1716). Trained in mathematics, philosophy and law, he wrote his first philosophical essay at seventeen. At twenty-one he became secretary to the elector at Mainz. From that time on, he divided his time between mathematics, politics, and philosophy. He discovered the differential and integral calculus, served as political adviser to various dukes and princes, and wrote a number of books in which he developed the philosophical idea of *Monads*—individual elements or "little universes," attuned to one another, of which the great universe is composed.

LEUCIPPUS: (date unknown). Ancient Greek philosopher acknowledged by Aristotle as the founder of the atomic theory.

LIVY: (59 B.C.-17 A.D.). He wrote, under the patronage of the emperor Augustus, a history of Rome in 142 volumes, of which only thirty-five have come down to the present day.

LOCKE, JOHN: (1632-1704). English philosopher. Educated at Oxford, he practiced medicine (without a degree) for several years, and then

became family physician and secretary to Lord Ashley. During this service he completed his famous *Essay on the Human Understanding*—a work which occupied him twenty years.

LUCRETIVS, CARUS TITUS: (97-53 B.C.). A student of the Epicurean philosophy, he immortalized this philosophy in his epic poem, *On the Nature of Things*. He is said to have committed suicide—a natural result, observed his critics, of his materialistic conception of a guideless world.

LUTHER, MARTIN (1483-1546). The son of a miner, he was educated for the church at the University of Erfurt. In 1507 he was ordained priest and the following year he was appointed professor of philosophy at the University of Wittenberg. In 1517 he "broke away" from the Catholic Church to become the founder of the Protestant Reformation. In 1520 he was excommunicated by the Pope. From 1526 to 1529 he prepared a new church service. "I was born," he wrote, "to fight." And he spent the rest of his life fighting and writing, translating the Bible and establishing Protestantism as the "new religion of Christ."

MACHIAVELLI, NICCOLO: (1469-1527). At thirty he was a high official in the Florentine Republic. As time went on he learned, through "practical experience," to "divorce politics from morality." When the Republic was overthrown, he wrote his infamous treaty on government and ethics, *The Prince*, in which he laid down the "principles" that would "insure the success" of tyrants and dictators.

MAIMONIDES, MOSES: (1135-1204). Jewish physician and philosopher. Trained in Greek and in Mohammedan as well as in Hebrew culture, he developed a philosophical calm in the midst of a life of turmoil, "with the staff of exile in his hand." Driven out of his native Spanish city of Cordova, he ended his days as court physician to Saladin in Cairo. His most famous philosophical work was *A Guide to the Perplexed*.

MARCUS AURELIUS ANTONINUS: (121-180). Philosopher, soldier and ruler, he was called by Canon Farrar "the noblest of pagan emperors." At twelve he became an ascetic. During his reign of twenty years, he established many reforms and charities, and wrote his famous *Meditations* on the philosophy of Stoicism. But he also persecuted the Christians and fought in the wars of aggressive Roman conquest. He died while engaged on one of his military campaigns.

MARX, KARL: (1818-1883). Descended from rabbis on both sides of the family, he was baptized in his childhood together with his parents. At twenty-three he wrote a brilliant essay on Democritus. But his interest then veered to the philosophy of economics. Throwing himself into the revolutionary movements of the day, he became the "Father of Socialism" and the author of *Capital*—the most controversial book on political economy in the history of thought. Exiled from Germany, he took refuge in England where he lived in extreme poverty and in almost religious devotion to the cause of the proletariat.

MENCIUS, the Latinized form of *Meng-tse*, which means *Meng the Teacher*: (372-289 B.C.). One of the greatest disciples of Confucius, he spent his life in search of "a wise prince and a just government." His quest, we are told, was unsuccessful.

MILL, JOHN STUART: (1806-1873). English philosopher. He wrote with equal facility on economics, philosophy and logic; and he was a recognized authority in each of the three fields. The purpose of his intellectual life was to establish a psychology founded on experience and allied with the natural sciences.

MOHAMMED: (570-632). Orphaned in infancy, he was a camel driver as a young man. At twenty-five he married a rich widow fifteen years his senior. He first announced his "divine revelation" at forty. Hounded by his countrymen for his unorthodox ideas, he fled from Mecca to Medina in 622. This flight, or *Hegira*, marks the beginning of the Mohammedan era. He spread his religion all over Arabia through a series of conquests, and finally (630) returned in triumph to Mecca.

MONTESQUIEU, CHARLES DE SECONDAT, BARON DE: (1689-1755). At twenty-seven he became president of the Parliament of Bordeaux, where he distinguished himself both as a statesman and as a philosopher. His greatest book is the *Spirit of Laws*—a work which occupied him twenty years.

MOSES: (about 1500 B.C.). Born of Jewish parents, he was educated at the court of the Egyptian Pharaoh. In early manhood, however, he left the royal palace and went to "seek God" in the wilderness. Having found Him, he returned to Egypt, liberated the Jews from captivity, gave them a religion and a Bible, and showed them the way to the Promised Land.

**NIETZSCHE, FRIEDRICH WILHELM:** (1844-1900). German philosopher. Descended from a Polish family whose name was Nietsky, he lost his father at seven, and was himself a chronic invalid for life. His philosophy throughout is colored by his suffering. For a time he taught at the University of Basle, but his chronic invalidism prevented his remaining long at any post. Again and again he wrote: "My hour may come upon me at any moment." His philosophy of the powerful superman was really a dream fulfilment superinduced by his own weakness. An unhappy love affair only helped to emphasize his bitterness. "The world is a madhouse," he said. And he himself died mad.

**PASCAL, BLAISE:** (1623-1662). French mathematician and philosopher. At nineteen he invented an arithmetical machine. At twenty-six he finished his celebrated work on mathematics. And then he renounced his scientific studies for theology, to which he devoted his remaining years.

**PAUL, SAINT:** (2-67). Born at Tarsus of Jewish parents, he was originally called Saul. Up to the time of his conversion, he was a strict Pharisee and bitter persecutor of the Christians, assisting at the martyrdom of Saint Stephen. After his conversion, he dedicated his life to the spreading of the Gospel both by "tongue and pen." It was a life full of external danger and turmoil but of inward peace. In the course of his journeys to make converts, he came to Rome where—according to tradition—he was put to death.

**PLATO:** (427-347 B.C.). He was one of the favorite children of heaven—endowed with noble ancestry, wealthy parents, a superb physique and a passionate hunger for wisdom. At twenty he became the pupil of Socrates. At his master's execution, he left Athens for a trip "around the world." At forty he returned to Athens and founded his famous Academy and began to write those "wisest words ever penned by the hand of man." At one time he accepted an offer to become the political adviser to King Dionysius of Syracuse. But the king sold him into slavery because of Plato's "too radical" ideas. Released, he returned to Athens and his teaching. "Had Jupiter descended to the earth, he would have spoken in the style of Plato."

**PLOTINUS:** (205-270). A native of Egypt, he is generally ranked first among the philosophical "disciples" of Plato. The philosophy of "this divine Plotinus" was closely allied to religion, and it exercised a profound influence on Christian thought in the Middle Ages.

PROTAGORAS: (481-411 B.C.). He is known as the first of the Greek Sophists—professional philosophers who taught for a fee. He was lost at sea while escaping from Athens where he had been indicted on the charge of atheism.

PYRRHO: (360-270 B.C.). A skeptical philosopher who had started life as a painter. His main thesis was that it is impossible for the human mind to know anything, and therefore it is foolish for the human heart to be perturbed.

PYTHAGORAS: (about 580-500 B.C.). Greek mathematician, astronomer and philosopher. He was the founder of the school of philosophy based on mathematics (adopted today by such men as Bertrand Russell). The universe, he said, is a unit of rhythmical bodies moving in harmony and producing sounds (the music of the spheres) in their motion.

ROUSSEAU, JEAN JACQUES: (1712-1778). Born in Geneva, he devoted his life to music, literature, science, philosophy and the common man. He wrote successful novels, essays, an operetta, the famous treatise on politics, *The Social Contract*, and the equally famous book on education, *Émile*—and died in extreme poverty. Toward the end he was obsessed by a persecution mania brought about by the attacks of the conservatives against his liberal ideas. He committed suicide out of fear that he might be assassinated.

ROYCE, JOSIAH: (1855-1916). Born in Grass Valley, California. Educated at the University of California and at Leipzig, Göttingen, and Johns Hopkins. He taught English at the University of California for four years, and philosophy at Harvard for more than a quarter of a century. His philosophical mind ranged over a wide variety of subjects—including mathematics, logic, psychology, social ethics, literary criticism and metaphysics. The world, he said, is a Great Community whose success depends upon the loyalty of its members.

RUSKIN, JOHN: (1819-1900). Educated at Oxford, he taught both at Oxford and at Cambridge. Famous as an art critic, he advocated a new type of criticism based upon a scientific foundation. His greatest contributions, however, were in the fields of political and of social philosophy. In these fields he was not only a "professor but a practitioner." He founded the *Laborers' Guild of St. George*, organized a linen industry based upon fair profits and fair wages, and revived hand loom weaving "to keep everybody employed."

RUSSELL, BERTRAND ARTHUR WILLIAM, EARL: (1872- ). Orphaned at three, he was brought up by his grandmother and educated by tutors. In 1890 he entered Cambridge University where he showed a marked aptitude for mathematics and philosophy. In 1910 he became lecturer at Cambridge, but lost his chair because of his opposition to the British conscription law in World War I. From that time on, he became a fighter for what he regarded as liberal causes, choosing poverty rather than preferment. Appointed again and again to teach at some institution, either in England or in America, he was always dismissed for his failure to "toe the mark."

SANTAYANA, GEORGE: (1863- ). Born in Spain, he was brought at the age of nine to the United States. He received his education at Harvard, where he taught philosophy for a number of years. He felt more at home, however, in ancient Greece than in modern America. "I always hated to be a professor." The work closest to his heart was the interpretation, in superb prose and in almost equally superb poetry, of the wisdom of yesterday for the guidance of today. In 1912 he resigned from Harvard and went to live in Europe where he devoted his life to "contemplation and composition."

SCHOPENHAUER, ARTHUR: (1788-1860). Born in Danzig, he lost his father at seventeen, hated his mother, hated his surroundings, hated the world. He was a dyspeptic and a skeptic. He never married, became attached to a poodle, growled like his dog at everybody, and came to regard life as the greatest of evils. This is the burden of his entire philosophy: Destiny has bestowed upon us a bitter gift—the will to live; and do what we may, we can never get rid of this gift.

SOCRATES: (469-399 B.C.). He earned his living as a sculptor and devoted his life to the "amateur sport" of teaching philosophy in the streets of Athens. Reputed as the wisest of men, he declared that his entire wisdom consisted in this—"I know that I know nothing." Arrested on the charge that he was "corrupting the youth," he was compelled to drink a cup of hemlock. His philosophy is known largely through the *Dialogues* of Plato, in which Socrates is often represented as the principal speaker.

SPENCER, HERBERT: (1820-1903). English philosopher. Educated by his father, a teacher of mathematics, and by his uncle, a clergyman, he worked for a number of years as a mechanical engineer. And he spent the rest of his life in demonstrating the machinery of that im-

mense engine—the universe. His philosophy was very influential at the turn of the century; but its popularity has waned with the passage of time.

**SPINOZA, BENEDICT:** (1632–1677.) Born in Amsterdam, and trained in the Bible, in philosophy and in science, he was excommunicated by the Jews as a rationalist and scorned by the Gentiles as a Jew. Adopting the profession of lens grinder, he spent his leisure time in sharpening the vision of mankind to the mystery of God. Though he lived in great need, he repeatedly turned down offers to teach because he resented any academic barrier to the freedom of his thought. He died of malnutrition and tuberculosis at forty-five.

**THALES:** (640–550 B.C.). He is known as the “Father of Greek Philosophy.” But he was equally proficient in science. Indeed, ancient philosophy in Europe grew out of the study of the physical sciences. Thales made important contributions not only to philosophy but to astronomy as well. Yet only a few fragments of his writings have come down to us.

**THUCYDIDES:** (471–about 400 B.C.). Historian and proprietor of a gold mine. In the Peloponnesian War he commanded a squadron of seven ships. Condemned to death because he lost a battle, he fled from Athens and lived in exile for twenty years. He returned to Athens, however, upon receiving his pardon (404) at the end of the war.

**TOLSTOY, COUNT LEO NIKOLAYEVITCH:** (1828–1910). He served as an officer in the Crimean war; but upon his discharge he became a pacifist for life. He gave up his claim to nobility and devoted himself to the peasants, opening a school for them at the village of Yasnaya Poliana. He gave voice to his liberal philosophy—a churchless sort of Christianity—in a series of brilliant novels and short stories. At eighty-two he left home to die, “like the poorest of my brothers,” as a homeless wanderer.

**VOLTAIRE:** (1694–1778). Original name, François Marie Arouet. Equally famous as a poet, dramatist, historian and philosopher. He was educated at the Jesuit Collège de Louis le Grand. But he was a skeptic for most of his life and an atheist toward the end. He was idolized by the women, hated by their husbands, and read by everybody. For a number of years he lived at the German Court as the intimate friend of Frederick the Great. His philosophy of free ex-



pression and free thought is said to have been the "cockcrow" that proclaimed the dawn of the French Revolution.

WHITMAN, WALT: (1819-1892). Born at West Hills, Long Island, he left school at twelve, was apprenticed to a printer, taught school for a time, edited the *Brooklyn Eagle*, and then devoted the rest of his life to the spreading, through his poetry, of the new Religion of Democracy. During the Civil War, he nursed the wounded soldiers. For a while he worked as a government clerk in Washington. But Secretary Harlan dismissed him for his "indecent book"—*Leaves of Grass*. Though Lincoln never met him in person, he saw him one day through a window and exclaimed, "There goes a man!"

ZOROASTER: (flourished about 650 B.C.). Founder of the "Religion of Light" and author of the *Zend-Avesta*—the Persian Bible of theology, philosophy and ethics. He is said to have been killed by brawling soldiers while praying in the temple to Ahura Mazda, "Lord of the Universe."

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